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K. K. von Rupselae.



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TO THE

PRECIOUS MEMORY

OF MY

REVERED KINDRED,

WHICH I HAVE HERE HUMBLY ENDEAVORED TO PRESERVE AND  
TRANSMIT FOR THE INSTRUCTION, GUIDANCE AND IMITA-  
TION OF THEIR DESCENDANTS,

THESE ANNALS ARE OFFERED AS A LOVING TRIBUTE.

NEW YORK, 1888.



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NOTES.





# ANNALS.

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## CHAPTER FIRST.

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### EARLY FAMILY HISTORY AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THE COLONIE.

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Their patronymic proves that our ancestors were landowners in the province of Guelderland, in the Netherlands, where it is found to-day attached to three places. (Notitia B.) It signifies "Deer's lair." We are apt to complain at the almost universal ignorance of the orthography of the name even among the best educated; and it is strange, considering the large place it occupies in the history of the nation, and its conspicuous position on every map of New York and even of the coast of Greenland. But it is reassuring to know that one of the marks that has distinguished it from common patronymics from the first, has been the great variety of spelling, of which we find the following specimens in ancient documents: *Ranslaer*; *Renzslaer*; *Rentzslaer*; *Rensslaer*; *Rensclare*; *Rinselart*; *Renslaer*; *Rinsclar*; *Renzluer*; *Rensalaer*; usually without the "Van," except in signatures, under their own hands.

Kiliaen, first patroon of Rensselaerswyck, was born in Nykerk, in the province of Guelderland, and settled in Amsterdam. where he was engaged in the diamond and pearl trade carried on by the East India Company. He was fourth in descent from Hendrick Wolter Van Rensselaer. He had five sons and four daughters, all of them under age when he died in 1645, in the flower of his age. His sons were Johannes, son of Hillegonda Van Bylant; Jan Baptist, > Jeremias, Nicolas and Rickert or Richard, by Anna Van Weely. We are descended from Jeremias, who married Maria Van Cortlandt, April 27, 1662.

They had two sons and two daughters. Kiliaen and Hendrick were the sons. We are descended from Hendrick, who married Catharine Van Bruggen, granddaughter of Anneke Janse Bogardus. They had three sons and six daughters.\* The sons were Johannes, Henry and Kiliaen. We are descended from their youngest son Kiliaen, who married Ariantje, daughter of Nicholas Schuyler, son of Philip and grandson of Philip Pietersen Schuyler and Margaretta Van Schlectenhorst.

They had four sons and three daughters. The sons were Hendrick, Philip, Nicholas and Kiliaen. We are descended from Kiliaen, who married Margaretta Sanders.

They had four sons, John Sanders, William, Richard and Barent or Bernard Sanders, and one daughter, Deborah, who died in infancy. John Sanders was my father. (Notitia A.)

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\* From Catharine, the second daughter, who married Johannes Ten Broeck, came Major John C. Ten Broeck, their grandson; and from Maria, the eldest, who married Samuel Ten Broeck, came his wife, Anna Van Schaick Ten Broeck, their granddaughter; the grandparents of General Thomas Hillhouse.

Thus, my children are seventh in descent from Kiliaen, the Patroon, and eleventh from the founder, Hendrick Wolter. Four hundred years embraces twelve generations. My father was descended on both his father's and his mother's side, without an exception, from the families who had been in the New Netherlands from its first settlement—Schuylers, Van Cortlandts, Van Schlectenhorsts, Jansens, Bogardus, Van Bruggens, Wendells, De Meyers, Glens, Sanders—a striking proof of the care taken in making family alliances among our forefathers.

The Patroonship of Rensselaerswyck was acquired, as all were, at command of the States General of Holland, by purchase from the Indians. It ran twenty-four miles along the Hudson river and twenty-four miles from it on either side. Subsequently it was increased by a purchase of land at Claverack, now in Columbia county. This immense tract of land was the home of savages, who lived and roamed unchecked through its boundless forests, and of whose ignorance mingled with cunning, and filthiness mixed with ferocity, the early records give vivid descriptions. Yet there is no evidence of any serious breach of the peace between them and the people of Rensselaerswyck, a marvelous contrast to the terrible experience of the lower Dutch settlements and the New England colonies. On the contrary, the Indians proved themselves many times most reliable allies to the settlers at Albany when threatened with attack by the French and Indians from Canada.

“A Popular History of the United States,” to which the honored name of Bryant is attached, gives the following version of the transactions of the

Patroons: "The same principle which the company was carrying out against the rest of the world, its richer and shrewder members enforced against their less fortunate fellow-shareholders. Before the charter was published some of the directors in the Amsterdam council had their preparations fully made to seize upon the benefits they knew to be in prospect." "When the action of these enterprising capitalists was revealed to their fellow-members in the Netherlands, they were indignantly denounced as having used 'the cunning tricks of merchants.' So strong was the feeling against Van Rensselaer and the rest, that they were required by the College of Nineteen to take several partners into the different proprietorships. But they easily evaded the purpose of that order, for Van Rensselaer took Godyn and Blommaert into his partnership, with John de Laet, Bissels and Moussart, other Amsterdam directors, and kept for himself two of the fifths into which he divided the estate. Godyn and Blommaert in turn took Van Rensselaer and de Laet into association with them, with Captain de Vries and several others, also directors. By this convenient arrangement the new partners gained little, and the first holders merely exchanged one property for another."

"The cunning tricks of merchants" strikes one as very excellent, coming, as it must have done, from a company of "Merchants and Traders." As the statement stands, it shows either that the Patroons had so much power in the company that they could practically set at nought its decrees; or, which is more likely, that only they and their partners had money and courage enough to embark in an enter-

prise so hazardous and requiring such an amount of ready money. We have no concern with the other Patroonships, which did not last, but facts connected with the acquisition and establishment of Rensselaerswyck are directly in the teeth of these assertions, as I shall proceed to show.

It is clear from the evidence of the Holland Documents, that the attempts of the Dutch West India Company to settle and govern the New Netherlands had not been successful—"the want of success was beyond expectation." After frequent reviews of their outlays and returns, "it was finally decreed and enacted," "on the 10th March, 1628," "for the behoof of all the stockholders in the said company, by virtue of the charter, to draw up Freedoms and Exemptions, for the benefit of the General West India Company, and advantage of the Patroons, masters and private persons." These having been prepared and reported were carefully discussed and revised at several subsequent meetings; "the proposals of certain respectable principal stockholders" were received and considered, and finally the "Freedoms and Exemptions" were enacted June 7, 1629, nearly a year and three months after the first formal step was taken. To suppose that this could have been done in ignorance of the plans of their co-directors, involves a belief in the dullness of Dutch merchants which their history does not sustain, or of a culpable negligence which the facts do not warrant. We are fairly entitled to assume from the statements of the records that the company acted with a full understanding that there were men among them who were prepared to make the venture neces-



sary to carry out their plans. No one seems to have denied the statement of the Patroons themselves, made to the States General in their remonstrance of June, 1634, that they, "animated with new zeal to carry out their High Mightiness' intention, and hoping, in consequence, for God's blessing, preceded all the other stockholders by way of a good example, saving the aforesaid company from expenses, troubles and heavy charges, and further involved themselves by undertaking divers Patroonships, the expenses whereof, incurred and laid out to this day, amount to not far from one ton of gold, cash down; and are yearly taxed, in addition, with at least 45,000 guilders for the support of three of their Patroonships."

Sebastiaen Jansen Crol, an officer of the company in command of Fort Orange for some years, was employed by Kiliaen Van Rensselaer to make the purchases of land from the Indians. There was no "cunning trick" in employing an agent of the Company to do this business. He "bought and paid for not only the grounds belonging to the chiefs and natives of the lands in New Netherland, but also their rights of sovereignty (*jura Majestatis*) and such others as they exercised within the limits of the Patroon's purchased territories. So that on the 28th November, 1630, were read at the Assembly of the Directors, the deeds of conveyance of the lands and jurisdictions purchased from the Saccimaes, the Lords of the Country, executed for the behoof of the Patroons, their successors; and the new proprietors were accordingly thereupon congratulated. On the 2d December, in the year aforesaid, the patents sent to the Patroons from New Netherland were in like

manner also again read, recorded in the Company's Register, ordered by the Assembly to be ensealed with the seal of New Netherland; the Patroons were again congratulated and handed their patents. 16th ditto. The Patroons, on resolution of the Assembly, delivered to the Company's counsel, a perfect list of their undertaken patroonships. 8th January, 1631. The Patroons' Colonies were *ex supra abundanti* confirmed, on submitting the question to the Assembly of the XIX., holden in Zealand." (New York Colonial Documents, Vol. i, pp. 84-5.) Thus after the lapse of a year and a half the West India Company, through its governing body, had failed to detect any "cunning tricks."

Weise says in his History of Albany just published that, "in order to advance more rapidly the growth of the colony, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer formed a limited partnership with Samuel Godyn, Johannes de Laet, and Samuel Blommaert, three influential members of the Amsterdam chamber of the West India Company;" they holding their respective Patroonships, while he retained his exclusive title of Patroon of Rensselaerswyck. Their respective claims on the Manor were purchased and extinguished by 1685.

"Kiliaen Van Rensselaer," says Weise "was peculiarly qualified for the duties of his Patroonship. He was self-reliant and practical, wealthy and ambitious. His plans for the settlement of his colony and his measures for the welfare of his people evince the sound judgment and the executive ability which gave his acts no little prominence in the history of New Netherland. He built comfortable houses and ample

barns for his tenants; provided them with agricultural implements and live-stock; erected saw and grist-mills at convenient places on the larger water-courses of the manor; and supplied his store with suitable goods to meet the common wants of the colonists."

"The governing body of the Dutch West India Company," says Mrs. Lamb, "was the College of the XIX., consisting of nineteen delegates from five chambers of managers, located in five principal Dutch cities. The Amsterdam chamber furnished eight of the nineteen delegates, and thus its relative consequence may be seen at a glance. Care was exercised in the selection of the directors for each chamber, and men only of wealth and the highest known integrity were eligible for the trust. The eight chosen men who were placed over the affairs of the Amsterdam chamber commanded, at the time, the entire confidence of the nation. One of these was Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, the founder of the Van Rensselaer manor, whose name has been handed along through every generation of men who have since had their day in New York and contributed to its progress, and is interwoven with all that is historical in city and state."

Some idea of the dangers and sufferings involved in emigrating to the New World may be formed from the account given by Dominie Jonas Michaëlius in his letter of August 11, 1628, on his arrival at the Manhatas. "The voyage continued long, viz., from the 24th of January till the 7th of April, when we first set our foot upon this land. Of storm and tempest we have had no lack, particularly about the



Bermudas and the rough coasts of this country, the which fell hard upon the good wife and children, not eating with us in the cabin, on account of the little room in it; but they bore it better as regards seasickness and fear, than I had expected. Our fare was very poor and scanty in the ship, so that my blessed wife and children, not eating with us, had a worse lot than the sailors themselves, and that by reason of a wicked cook who annoyed them in every way; but especially by reason of the captain himself, who, although I frequently complained of it in the most courteous manner, did not concern himself in the least about correcting the rascal; nor did he when they were all sick give them anything which could do them any good, although there was enough in the ship; though he himself knew very well where to find it, in order out of meal times to fill his own belly. All the relief which he gave us consisted merely in liberal promises, with a drunken head, which promises nothing followed, when he was sober, but a sour face; and thus has he played the brute against the officers, and kept himself constantly to the wine, both at sea and especially here in the river; so that he has navigated the ship daily with a wet sail and an empty head, coming ashore seldom to the Council, and never to the public Divine Service. We bore all with silence on board the ship; but it grieves me when I think of it on account of my wife; the more because the time was so short which she had yet to live."

Nor were the hardships ended after they had escaped the perils and privations of the voyage: "There are no horses, cows nor laborers to be obtained here for money. Every one is short in these

particulars and wants more. There is here no refreshment of butter, milk, &c., to be obtained, although a very high price be offered for them; for the people who bring them and bespeak them are suspicious of each other. So I will be compelled to pass through the winter without butter and other necessaries which the ships did not bring with them to be sold here. The rations which are given out and charged for high enough, are all stale food, as they are used to on board ship, and frequently this is not very good, and there cannot be obtained as much of it as may be desired. I began to get some strength through the grace of the Lord, but in consequence of this hard fare of beans and grey peas, which are hard enough, barley, stock fish, &c., without much change, I cannot become well as I otherwise would. The summer yields something, but what of that for any one who has no strength? \* \* \* We want ten or twelve farmers with horses, cows and laborers in proportion, to furnish us with bread and fresh butter, milk and cheese."

To supply these wants by establishing colonies of permanent settlers, was the great aim of the Patroons. To accomplish such a design it was necessary to transport families as well as separate individuals to their manors. Having incurred the expenditure and risks involved in this, and after their colonies were begun, they suddenly found their enterprises endangered and secretly undermined on the 30th October, 1631, when new articles were proposed, "whereby the previous Freedoms and Exemptions were no longer attainable; the Patroons particularly commanded to perform things which experience taught

them were impracticable: Yea, all the Exemptions were drawn into dispute." To this attempt the Patroons replied by an earnest and dignified remonstrance addressed to the States General, together with a "Pretension and Claim," June 16, 1634, in which they assert "that the Freedoms and Exemptions promised and granted to the Patroons and their people" "are to be holden as a mutual contract, binding on both sides, whereby the Patroons were invited to send their people and goods thither; in consequence whereof they claim to enjoy inviolate the privileges contained therein." So disturbed were they by these attacks that they stated in a reply to the West India Company that "they shall have conjointly to determine upon the continuation or abandonment of their Colonies."

February 5, 1641. "Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, Patroon of his Colonie called Rensselaerswyck," petitioned their High Mightinesses the States General for a *Veniam Testandi*, "in order to enable him to dispose by last will, according to his pleasure, of the aforesaid manor or feudal estate." This was granted the same day, and it shows that the partnership did not affect the fee of the Manor, and that there was no law of entail originally attached to it.

There is no authentic proof that the first Patroon ever visited Rensselaerswyck, although my grandfather used to tell of a report that he had inhabited a house near Fort Orange, which probably referred to his son Jan Baptist, sometime Director of the Manor. Another tradition placed his house at the north end of Castle Island opposite Cherry Hill. But his affairs were so extensive, and his family so young,

that, although he might have visited his Colonie, it is hardly probable that he remained in it for a long time, especially as he could serve it to greater advantage in Amsterdam. His death in 1645 was undoubtedly a great set-back to its prosperity, as well as an irreparable loss to his family and the nation. He was an ardent patriot and a sincere and generous promoter of religion. None of his sons were old enough to succeed him, the eldest, Johan, being under age and having as guardians his kinsmen, Johan Van Weely and Wouter Van Twiller. These petitioned the States General, October 21, 1648, for "Letters of Investiture" to their ward "of High, Middle and Low Jurisdiction over the Colonie situate in New Netherland and called Rensselaerswyck." There was a delay in granting this, pending the settlement of a claim made by Samuel Blommaert and Johannes de Laet. co-directors, against the guardians; but from a resolution of the Assembly of the States General. 13th November, 1649, it would seem to have been passed soon afterwards.\* In confirming the judgment in favor of Blommaert and de Laet, June 14, 1650, the States General voted that "when the fief shall be taken up in the name of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer's son and his successors, it be well and faithfully expressed in the patent, that to the aforesaid Kiliaen Van Rensselaer's son and his successors, belongs no greater superiority and authority than to the aforesaid plaintiffs, his equals and partners in the aforesaid Colonie, except simply the title of Patroon"; with two votes out of four in the management. All these partners were bought

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\* It was granted April 7, 1650. Holland Document, 1, 383.

out by 1685, under the grandson of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer.

At first the Colonie was managed by Commissaries, the most famous of whom, Arendt Van Curler, gained such influence over the Mohawks by his kind and just treatment that ever afterwards they expressed their highest respect for the Governors of New York by giving them the name of "Corlaer." He was succeeded in 1647 by Brandt Arent Van Slechtenhorst, famous for his dispute with Governor Stuyvesant about the land around Fort Orange, which he claimed for the Patroon, and Stuyvesant for the West India Company; and also about the manorial jurisdiction. Stuyvesant resorted to force to carry his designs into effect, and caused Van Slechtenhorst to be arrested and imprisoned, 1651, at New Amsterdam. But the Governor was entirely wrong, as usual with him, as the commission appointed by the Duke of York to decide on the Van Rensselaer title, of which John Churchill, afterwards the famous Duke of Marlborough, was one, decided in 1678, restoring to the Manor the fee of all the land taken by Stuyvesant around the fort. By the marriage of his daughter Margaretta with Philip Pietersen Schuyler, Christmastide, 1650, Van Slechtenhorst became the great-grandfather of my grandfather's maternal grandfather, Nicholas Schuyler, and the ancestor of General Philip Schuyler and the Schuylers of Watervliet.

In 1651 Jan Baptiste, the third son of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, arrived at Fort Orange, being the first of the family who came to this continent, as far as we can ascertain. He brought with him his youngest brother, Richard, then a child. He arrived

in the midst of the dispute with Governor Stuyvesant and seems to have taken a lively interest in it. A witticism of his during one of the outbreaks arising from it, reported by Weise, (page 96), has a family flavor about it, and may be taken as authentic. He became Director of Rensselaerswick May 8, 1652. A memorial of him is preserved in a pane of glass belonging to the old Dutch church once standing at the foot of State street, built 1656, containing the family coat of arms, but wanting the three star fish in the right-hand quartering, as we have it, and inscribed, "Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer, Directeur Der Colony, Rensselaerswyck, 1656." A ferry had been established previously to his arrival to maintain connection between the two shores of the river. After an administration of about six years, Jan Baptist returned to Holland and became a leading merchant in Amsterdam, where we find his name attached to public documents during the years 1667, 1674 and 1677.



## CHAPTER SECOND.

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JEREMIAS, SON OF KILIAEN VAN RENSSELAER, SUCCEEDS HIS BROTHER JAN BAPTISTE AS DIRECTEUR OF RENSSELAERSWYCK — HIS MARRIAGE WITH MARIA VAN CORTLANDT—THEIR CHILDREN.

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Jan Baptiste was succeeded by his brother Jeremias, who was the first of the family to take up his residence permanently in America. He married, April 27, 1662, Maria Van Cortlandt, daughter of Oloff Stevanus Van Cortlandt, and from this pair all the Van Rensselaers now living under the name are descended.

The first erection at Albany was, as we have seen, Fort Orange. The site of it was called from the first "The Fuyck," or net, from its peculiar adaptedness to "catch" the Indian trade from the west and north. It kept its reputation as such for many generations, and in fact till there was nothing left for the Indians to fetch, and few Indians left to come for anything but subsidies. In that exposed frontier the traders and settlers naturally congregated around the fort for security, and the village, or "dorp," that arose there was called "Beverswyck." Here was established the first church, of which "Church street" is the memorial. It was built 1646, four years after the arrival of Dominie Megapolensis. The land of Beverswyck was claimed by the Manor, but Governor Stuyvesant enforced the removal of all the buildings as far as the present Hudson avenue. This proceeding in 1655 required the erection of a new church, which was built at the foot of State street in 1656. North of Foxen creek was the "Colonic," as it was called

even in my day, extending to the Manor House, which was originally a modest building of brick brought from Holland, by the side of the present Troy road (which was not in existence then) opposite the present Manor House, built in 1765. On the capture of New Netherlands by the British in 1664 the name Albany was given to it after the Duke of York and Albany, the graceless brother of the graceless Charles II., who had given it away to him before he owned it. So matters remained for nine years until, in 1673, Commodores Evertsen and Binckes suddenly appeared in the harbor of New York, and reconquered the province for the Prince of Orange and the Dutch. Albany became Willemstadt and the fort Fort Nassau, the Colonie having always kept its title. New York was changed to "New Orange," in honor of the Prince. Again there came a change, and this time a final one, when the States General restored the province to the English, and the discarded names were restored.

The Directorship of Jeremias Van Rensselaer was a busy one, involving Indian depredations and the English subjugation in 1664. Stuyvesant, having succeeded in having the houses around Fort Orange cleared away, had become quiet, and the most amicable relations seem to have been established between him and the Rensselaerswyck authorities. Jeremias Van Rensselaer presided over a council convened in New Amsterdam in the early part of 1664 to deliberate on the unprotected state of the Province. Promises of help from Rensselaerswyck and Beverswyck had been made to the Director General at this *Landtsdagh*, and when rumors came of the sailing of the



English fleet the Governor addressed an urgent letter July 8, 1664, to his "Honorable and most Dear" La Montagne and Van Rensselaer, asking for the fulfilment of it. But in the meantime the Mahikanders had been on the war-path and had slain nine head of cattle on the Director's bouwerie at Greenbush, and burnt Abraham Staets' bouwerie with the farmer, carrying off his wife and one negro; and so they felt compelled to decline to send the guns and powder requested by the "Right Honorable General," and the "Loan of 5,000 or 6,000 guilders in Wampum for the Honorable Company" was entirely beyond their means. Accordingly, Petrus Stuyvesant made what seems from the published records to have been his first and only peaceful visit to Fort Orange in August, 1664. But this visit brought great trouble upon him afterwards. It was made at an unfortunate time, and he tarried too long enjoying the hospitalities of the Manor. The British fleet was approaching Sandy Hook, and no steps had been taken for the defence of New Amsterdam. Within a week after his return they were summoning him to surrender, and the burghers declared themselves "obliged, before God and the world, to protest against and call down on your Honors (the Governor and Council) the vengeance of Heaven for all the innocent blood which shall be shed in consequence of your Honors' obstinacy" in delaying to surrender to the British commander. They enforced it with a homily, which shows the moulding hand of Domine Megapolensis: "We trust your Honors will not question that to God who seeks not the death of a sinner, belongs obedience, rather than to man. We feel

certain, therefore, that your Honors will exhibit yourselves, in this pressing exigency and sorrowful season, as men and Christians, and conclude, with God's help, an honorable and reasonable capitulation, which may the Lord our God, in His great mercy, be pleased to grant us! Amen." All fight seemed to have been eradicated from the fiery old warrior. He had been fooled into believing that the enemy were *four* times as many as they actually were, and he stood looking on from the fort while two of the British vessels defiantly sailed up the North river under his guns. Van Sletchtenhorst was avenged when his old foe surrendered the New Netherlands without firing a shot, and the West India Company, when they presented their reply to the Governor's report to their High Mightinesses the States General, concluded by saying: "That the sole cause and reason for the loss of the aforesaid place, were these: The Authorities (Regenten) and the chief officer, being very deeply interested in lands, bouweries and buildings, were unwilling to offer any opposition, first, at the time of the English encroachments, in order thereby not to afford any pretext for firing and destroying their properties; and, having always paid more attention to their particular affairs than to the Company's interests. New Amsterdam was found, on the arrival of the English frigates, as if an enemy was never to be expected. And, finally, that the Director, first following the example of heedless interested parties, gave himself no other concern than about the prosperity of his bouweries, and, when the pinch came, allowed himself to be rode over by clergymen, women and cowards, in order to surrender to the English

what he could defend with reputation, for the sake of thus saving their private properties." In this event Diederick Knickerbocker's veracious History of New York found its appropriate inspiration.

Jeremias Van Rensselaer took the inevitable oath of allegiance to the authority of the Duke of York. He was left undisturbed in the government of the Colonie, but an English officer was put in command of Fort Albany, as Orange was now called. Colonel Nicolls, the English commander, declined to admit "the Towne of Albany to be part of Rensselaerwick," or "a succession to his brother Baptista as of right belonging to" Jeremias Van Rensselaer, without the express decision of the Duke, "making answer in a Latine verse which in some sort you (Jeremias) may apply," it being probably all the "Latine" that the Colonel had at hand: "*Filius ante diem Patrios inquiri in annos.*" Whether our ancestor's love of letters made him relish the rebuff the better because it was conveyed in "Latine" is not recorded, but perforce he was obliged to remain content with this reply of his "affe freind" till he could get a better one from his superior. This occurred in 1666. When Evertsen and Binckes recaptured New York in 1673, he petitioned for a "confirmation of the previous privileges granted by their "High Mightinesses to the Colonie Rensselaerswyck," which they would only grant for one year, "within which time the aforementioned Rensselaer shall be bound to obtain new privileges from their High Mightinesses, &c.; or, failing the same, he shall be occluded from said privileges." "This day Mr. Rensselaer took the oath of allegiance before the Council." But the next

year, under the terms of the Treaty of Westminster, the Province was given finally to the English, and after a delay of three years and a half, "Governor Andros was ordered to issue a patent to the heirs of Killiaen Van Rensselaer, by which they were granted the possession of the manor of Rensselaerswyck with such privileges and immunities as they formerly enjoyed."

Richard remained in the Colonie after the return of Jan Baptiste, and became owner of "the Flats," which Mrs. Grant has made famous, and which was bought by Captain Philip Pietersen Schuyler after his departure for the Fatherland. His name as "Richard Renzelaer" occurs in the "Catalogue Alphabetically of ye Names of such Inhabitants of New Yorke, &c., as tooke the oath to bee true subjects, to His Majestie, October the 21st, 22d, 24th and 26th dayes, 1664." It is also found in the list of Commissaries confirmed by Governor Nicolls for Rensselaerswyck: but he returned to Holland and became the founder of the branch that remained there.

"Sieur Jeremias Van Rensselaer," as he was styled by Governor Anthony Colve, died in the same year as the transfer to the English, leaving four children and the Colonie to the guardianship of his widow and her brother, Stephanus Van Cortlandt. "He acquired great influence among the Indians, and won the sincere respect of the French in Canada. His portrait represents him as a remarkably handsome man of courtly presence. His correspondence, which still exists, shows native talent and enormous industry. His autograph is remarkable for its beauty, and is one of the most characteristic that could be found in

a century (it is given in Bryant's History of the United States). He presided over the Landtsdag, or Diet, that assembled in New Amsterdam, about five months before the surrender of the province, it having been called by Stuyvesant to discuss the precarious condition of affairs and give advice. From the records it appears that his conduct of the meeting in dignity and ceremony could hardly have been excelled by their High Mightinesses themselves." (Mrs. Lamb's article in Magazine of American History, January, 1884.) He left four children: Kiliaen, born 1663; Anna, born 1665; Hendrick, born 1667; and Maria, born 1672. Numerous descendants of all of them survive. Kiliaen married his cousin, Maria Van Cortlandt, and became the founder of the Manor House branch. Hendrick married Catharine Van Bruggen, and became the founder of our branch, which is by far the most numerous. Anna married first her cousin Kiliaen, son of Johannes, who inherited the estates in Holland, but died early without children; then she became the wife of William Nichol, and the Sills are descended from them. Maria married Peter Schuyler, first mayor of Albany and the leading character of his time in the affairs of the Province. They also have numerous descendants.

The Reverend Nicholas Van Rensselaer, fourth son of the first Patroon, was a graduate of the University of Leyden, in the register of which his name may be found spelt "Rentzlaer." He received Holy Orders in England in the reign of Charles II. He settled in Albany in 1674, and married Alida Schuyler, daughter of Philip Pietersen Schuyler and Margaretta



Van Schlectenhorst. He was refused permission to officiate by the authorities of the Dutch Church in Albany, in consequence of his ordination, and was imprisoned in the course of the dispute. His house was on the north side of State street between North Pearl and Chapel streets, probably at the west end of the Tweddle building. He was believed to have the gift of "second sight," which brought him trouble at his end, according to the following incident: "His (Robert Livingston's) first interview with his future wife, as told by Mrs. Montgomery in her unpublished memoirs, is too good a story to be omitted. The Domine (Rev. Nicholas Van Rensselaer) was absent from home when increasing infirmities convinced him that his end was approaching. Accompanied by his young wife, he attempted to reach the manor, where he wished to end his days. As he approached Albany he informed his friends that he would arrive in sight of his own house, but that he would not live to enter it. At Albany he took to his bed, and requested that a lawyer should be sent to make his will. Robert Livingston was the person selected for the office. The young man arranged his paper and waited for instructions. The Domine looked at him earnestly, and then said, 'Send that young man away.' His brother-in-law Schuyler remonstrated in vain. Livingston was dismissed. The wife, although much distressed, could not help telling her husband that he had been rude to a young man who had done nothing to deserve it. He replied, 'That young man shall not make my will, for he will be your second husband.' The incredulous will say that the prophecy occasioned its own fulfilment."

The untimely loss of their father was a most serious injury to the children of Jeremias, and the cause of great troubles to Rensselaerswyck. Kiliaen was only eleven years old, and the brothers in Holland were fully occupied with their own affairs. The claims of heirs and co-directors remained unsettled, and disputes arose on all sides. The education of her children and the care of their estate devolved on his widow (our great-great-great-grandmother), and she seems to have shown herself fully qualified for the difficult task. She was aided in it by her brother Stephen Van Cortlandt, one of the ablest and most influential men in the Province. The following account gives the impression which she made on two missionaries from Friesland in 1680: "We went to call upon a certain Madam Rentslaer, widow of Heer Rentslaer, son of the founder of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, comprising twelve miles square from Fort Orange, that is, twenty-four miles square in all. She is in possession of the place, and administers it as *patronesse*, until one Richard Van Rentslaer, residing at Amsterdam, shall arrive in the country, whom she expected in the summer, when he would assume the management of it himself. This lady was polite, quite well-informed, and of good life and disposition. \* \* \* She treated us kindly. \* \* \* We went to look at several of her mills at work, which she had there on an everrunning stream, grist-mills, saw-mills and others. \* \* \* Returning to the house, we politely took our leave. Her residence is about a quarter of an hour from Albany up the river." (Weise's History of Albany, pages 173, 174.)

The marriage of her daughter Anna with her cousin Kiliaen, son of Johannes, united her family with the oldest branch; but he did not live long after it, and his death, in 1687, left no male descendant of the elder branch surviving. The marriage of Maria, her second daughter, with Peter Schuyler, united them to the ablest man and most influential family next to their own in the Colonie. Her younger son, Hendrick, married in 1689 Catharine Van Bruggen, of New York, granddaughter of Anneke Janse Bogardus. As his elder brother did not marry till twelve years after, it was supposed that Hendrick would be his heir; but the Patroon Kiliaen disappointed them by marrying, in 1701, Maria, daughter of Stephen Van Cortlandt, and by her became the father of seven children.

Kiliaen was a soldier, and saw service against the French and Indians at the head of his company of horse under his brother-in-law, Major, afterwards Colonel, Peter Schuyler. He was the first deputy from the Manor to the Provincial Assembly, from 1691 to 1703; after which he was called to one Provincial Council. He was also, with his brother, Commissioner for Indian Affairs under the different royal governors of the Province till his death in 1719; from which time the two streams of the family have remained separate, with but two partial intermixtures, to their unquestionable purity and more vigorous development.

In May, 1686, the heirs of Jeremias Van Rensselaer granted to Governor Dongan for the territory of the city of Albany, which he wished to incorporate, sixteen square miles of the manor lands towards Schenectady.



### CHAPTER THIRD.

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#### THE MANOR GRANTED TO KILIAEN VAN RENSSELAER BY QUEEN ANNE.

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Anna, daughter of Johannes Van Weely, widow of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, survived her husband a quarter of a century, and died June 12, 1670, in Amsterdam, as appears from an affecting account written by the Rev. Nicholas Van Rensselaer, her son, given in Holgate's "American Genealogy," concluding with this aspiration: "May the good God grant her, and us with her, a joyous resurrection at the last day." The estate of her husband had never been settled, and remained unsettled for half a century, until, in 1695, Kiliaen, son of Jan Baptiste, came over for the purpose of satisfying all the surviving heirs. Kiliaen, elder son of Jeremias, represented the American claimants, and there being five classes of heirs to the whole estate, he received the Colonie as one-fifth upon his paying £700, at which it was valued beyond the other five. In this settlement he received for himself, his brother and sisters between 700,000 and 800,000 acres of land. In 1704, during the governorship of the notorious Lord Cornbury, he secured from Queen Anne (who was cousin to Lord Cornbury) a patent for the whole estate, erecting it into a Manor. Of this vast territory, thus acquired, he gave to his brother Hendrick a mile square at

Greenbush, including the old mansion, and the Claverack Manor—about one-tenth of what he had received for *all* the heirs; to the son of his sister, Mrs. Peter Schuyler, 400 acres south of the “Flats;” and to his nephew, Rensselaer Nicol, “Cedar Hill,” the home of the Sills.<sup>1</sup> (*Vide* Notitia B. and D.)

The coming of the race destined to supplant in our time both the Dutch and the English in the control of New York, was prefigured, so to speak, by the arrival in New York, April 2, 1698, of Richard Coote, “Earl of Bellomont and Baron of Coloony, in the county of Sligo,” Ireland. His lordship came as a “Reformer;” but, although there were doubtless many things to be reformed, he soon showed that the way of his impulsive, pragmatic and dogmatic countrymen was by no means the best one, to say the least. “Privateers” had been encouraged and protected, who were afflicted, when they got to sea, with a peculiar color-blindness which made them unable to distinguish between the red cross of England and the white lilies of France or the crescent of the Turk. It was the time of the famous Captain Kidd, whose name and fame continue to haunt the shores of the Hudson, Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay. He tried to beguile the earl by sending costly jewels to the countess; but his lordship, to his credit, would have none of him, caused him to be arrested and

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<sup>1</sup> My venerable and esteemed friend, Mrs. Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, has told me a tradition preserved in their branch of the family which throws light on this transaction, although it does not entirely clear it up, as it leaves the treatment of the sisters unaccounted for. The story is that Hendrick, having been married fifteen years and having no son, had given up all hopes of an heir, and agreed to the arrangement by which the patent from Queen Anne was granted to his brother. As the elder brother at that time had no son, and there was no male heir in America, there was a strong probability of the Manor's passing out of the family; but Kiliaen had married twelve years after his brother, and there was a probability of his having a successor. In fact one was born to him the next year (1705), followed by other sons. As if to show the vanity of all human calculations, Hendrick had *three* sons born between 1711 and 1717, of whom my great-grandfather was the youngest.

gave up the jewels. There had been extravagant land-grants under his predecessor, Colonel Fletcher, which had left him nothing to divide or share; and he seriously proposed a general confiscation of the great landed estates, including "Colonel Courtlandt's, Colonel Beckman's grant; Colonel Peter Schuyler's, Mr. Livingston's and Mr. Ranslaer's." To make matters worse he joined himself to the adherents of Leisler and Milbourne, and turned their opponents out of the Council, by which he rekindled the slumbering embers of strife, which might have caused a serious conflagration but for his death, March 5, 1701. The state of feeling which he left behind him was shown by a "Petition and Address" to the King, William III., signed by the leading men of the Province. (Colonial Documents of New York, IV., 933-942.)

Kiliaen was succeeded in 1719 by his eldest son, Jeremiah, born in 1705. He never married, and died at the age of forty, leaving the manor to his brother Stephen, who married Elizabeth Groesbeeck, and from whom it has descended to the present owners. Jeremiah represented Rensselaerswyck in the Provincial Assembly from 1726 to 1743. In 1734 he made a visit to Montreal in company with another gentleman whose name is not given, but who may be conjectured to have been a Schuyler from the account given of it in a despatch from the Marquis de Beauharnois, Governor-General, to Count de Maurepas, October 10, 1734. "As respects Orange, you will be informed that the Patroon or Lord of that city visited Montreal this summer, in company with another influential gentleman of that country, on pretense of traveling and making a tour, and *nevertheless*

provided with a passport from the English Governor, from whom they handed me a letter on the subject of the fort which that Governor had imagined I was having built among the Senecas. These two Englishmen, who are Dutch (Flamands), have privately informed me, and I was aware of it, that the late M. de Vaudreuil, in the *last* war, had always spared their country, and had recommended the Indians not to make any incursions into it; that the father of one of these two Englishmen had kept up a secret correspondence with M. de Vaudreuil, and that they would do the same with me; that as for themselves, being in more intimate relation with the Indians than the English *are*, they would *make no* movement against us; adding that he had thus acted with fidelity during twenty years. I answered that there was no appearance of any rupture, and as for me, I should be much inclined to adopt M. de Vaudreuil's policy, and, in fine, that I would have the honor to write to you on the subject. I entertained them well, and paid them every sort of attention, and they seemed to me to return home content."

The Count de Maurepas replied as follows, under date of "Versailles, 10th May, 1735:" "As for the visit of the Patroon, or Lord of Orange, and another gentleman of the country paid last summer to Montreal, to propose to you to act towards him as the late Marquis de Vaudreuil had done with his predecessor; that is, to spare the country and to recommend the Indians not to make any incursions there, I was in fact aware that such a course had been adopted in the last war, but that the Lord of Orange had not responded, as he ought, to the regard which was had

for him, there having been several English parties at Orange and in its vicinity, of which he gave no notice. As for the rest, as you do not propose anything touching the proceedings of these two men, and as you are in a position to know whether it will be proper or not to accept the proposition, His Majesty will refer the matter to you, observing to you, however, that this kind of strict neutrality may be more injurious than profitable, and that, should it occur, 'twill be necessary to adopt precise measures to prevent it causing any prejudice to the Colony." (Colonial History of New York, IX., pages 1039, 1040, 1048.)

Jeremiah Van Rensselaer was nominated for member of the Provincial Council by Governor George Clinton, November 18, 1743, and his appointment urged on the Board of Trade as "the gentleman of the most considerable fortune and influence in the county of Albany, and a very loyal subject, and able at all times to promote His Majesty's Service." He was confirmed April 5, 1745, but before his commission arrived he had died. How the recommendation of Governor Clinton is to be reconciled with the report of Governor de Beauharnois does not appear, although the "Lord of Orange" might have pleaded that so long as the King's government left them, as it did, to take care of themselves against the enemies which his wars in Europe made for them, they were justified in making the best terms for their own security.



## CHAPTER FOURTH.

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### HENDRICK VAN RENSSELAER AND THE EASTERN MANOR.

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Hendrick, from whom we are sprung, received from his brother Kiliaen, together with the 1,500 acres of land and the island opposite Albany, the family mansion now standing on the bank of the Hudson at Greenbush. It was built in 1642, and marks the date of the arrival of the first Dutch minister. It was provided with portholes for musketry, which remain still in its solid walls; as were all isolated colonial mansions in that early day, for defence against the Indians. The old Manor house of the Van Cortlandts at Croton is another surviving specimen of the style, as was the old mansion of historic fame at Scotia. Even the old church at the foot of State street was built in the form of a block-house and mounted with three cannon furnished by the Patroon. But no occasion for using them ever occurred, the only hostile cannon-shot fired at Albany being by Dutchmen against Dutchmen. Once even, when a body of French and Algonquins appeared in their neighborhood in winter, suffering from cold and hunger, the Rensselaerswyckians and Beverwyckians united in sending a supply of food to them, and offering to take them into their houses.

Hendrick Van Rensselaer was a man of mark, and held many important positions at Albany and in the Provincial administration. He was an Alderman of Albany, and a Commissioner for Indian Affairs for many years, and took part in the leading conferences with the Five Nations under Lords Bellomont, Cornbury, Lovelace, and Governors Hunter and Burnet, during a period of thirty years. He secured a tract of land at Schaghticoke to which the city of Albany was found to have a prior right of purchase, and which he accordingly transferred to the corporation. His sons were Johannes, Henry and Kiliaen; his daughters, Maria, married to Samuel Ten Broeck; Catharine, married to Johannes Ten Broeck; Anna, married to Peter Douw; Elizabet, married to John Richard; and Helena, married to Jacob Wendell. One son, Jeremias, died young. A pleasing reminiscence of the intimate and friendly relations existing at this time between the branch which was descended from Richard and remained in Holland, and those in America, is preserved in the following letter written to his fourth daughter, Mrs. Elizabet Richard, in 1753, by a grandson of Richard's; it was written in Dutch, which they all spoke and wrote, and translated, reads as follows:

*“Madame and Highly Respected Cousin:*

“It would be a crime (as correspondence is like the fire that keeps love between friends at a distance burning and blazing) to let the best opportunity go by without showing you my esteem, as the most tender and obliging expressions (mentioned in your esteemed of January 15) bind me to do so. My heart was most tenderly affected on receiving the same, by the utmost desire to learn from them your welfare and that of your husband, which I perceived to my utmost pleasure on opening it; even so that every letter was as the most pleasing flower in a garden; and not only charmed the eye, but gave a heart-strengthening odor of friendship; and justly awakened my affection towards you, to whom (however personally unknown) I am related by the tie of blood. Let this alliance never be lost sight of through failure of

correspondence, but remain steadfast in order to reap the pleasant fruit of an upright and steady friendship.

“Your present (being the skin of a beaver), for which I am very much obliged to you, was very agreeable (although of little use here), and was considered as an act of a very affectionate and friendly heart. The accompanying case with a colored china tea-set, which we have the honor to offer you, and is sent under the care of Captain Johs. Keteltas,—may it be received by you with the same love as it is sent by me, to give me more pleasure which I take to serve my friends and to show them the signs of my affection.

“This present (which is the work of the genius of the Indians, and was brought here by the ships of the East India Company), we hope may be agreeable to you, and be used many years with great pleasure.

“With this we finish, after wishing you Heaven’s best blessings, and tender greetings of all friends, and sign with great esteem, Madame and very esteemed Cousin.

Your obdt. Servt. and Cousin,

ANTHONY VAN RENSSELAAR, Junr.

AMSTERDAM, 3 May, 1753.”

Albany has been favored beyond most modern towns in having its “Idyll,” in the form of the charming “Memoirs of an American Lady,” written by Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, whose father was an officer of the Fifty-fifth regiment, engaged in the old French war. Chapters iv.—xi., of this interesting book contain a lively and minute description of the manners and customs of the Albanians, although her account applies more to the middle class than to that of her heroine, Mrs. Philip Schuyler, as my great-aunt, Mrs. Leonard Gansevoort, who lived at the epoch of the Idyll, informed me. Albany has also a romance, “Domine Freylinghausen,” by Florence Wilford, which is a most exquisite idealization of the “Memoirs.” Weise’s History of Albany gives, in chapter ix., an interesting account of Dutch habits and customs in the olden time. Mrs. Bonney also, in her “Legacy of Historical Gleanings,” vol. i. 4, 5, describes the annual dinner of the St. Nicholas Society with a spirit and abandon that must have been caught from some jovial kinsman, in whom the



enthusiasm of the feast was still lingering. It may not be improper to add a few points to these authorities.

The Hollanders in the New Netherlands continued the use of their hereditary tongue almost exclusively to the generation of my grandfather. I have heard him say how much trouble he had on his first going to school from his imperfect knowledge of English. His generation always preferred to speak Dutch among themselves, and it was a sort of Masonic sign between them when they met by chance. It seems singular that, while my grandfather and grandmother and their kindred used it constantly in their family, my father and uncles could not speak it. It is my impression that they discouraged the use of it by their children, because of their early impressions at school. Mrs. Philip S. Van Rensselaer (Anna Van Cortlandt) used to tell of her unhappiness as a child when she was taken to Albany, and could not speak Dutch, and was laughed at by her playmates and called "English," the highest term of reproach they could use. I remember, when a boy, sitting in the old parlor at Scotia, among *nineteen* venerable kinsmen and kinswomen, in which not a word of English was spoken during a whole evening, except to enlighten my ignorance, which was always done for us youngsters with a kind of pity, as if our education had been sadly neglected.

They were accustomed to have their children baptized as soon after their birth as possible, and with God-parents to answer for them. The entries of marriages, births and baptisms in family Bibles contained a devout invocation of God's blessing and

salvation, as may be seen in the records of my great-grandfather's family in my possession.

No Hollander who had any regard for his reputation after his death, neglected to make ample preparation for his funeral, according to his means, of which the national beverages made no inconsiderable part. In this respect they felt that they were only doing their duty to themselves and their posterity. Had they foreseen the judgment of their descendants on that and kindred subjects they would have grieved over the coming degeneracy. Funeral rings were distributed among the relatives of the deceased, one of which, in my possession, marked "K. V. R., obit September 16, 1719," commemorates Kiliaen the Patroon, my grandfather's great-uncle.

The subjoined preserved among the papers of the Rev. Dr. Romeyn of Schenectady, and given to me by his great-granddaughter, Mrs. Pierre Van Cortlandt, shows how carefully our fathers guarded the contract of marriage:

*" Rd Sir :*

" I take the liberty of requesting you to Publish me, in your Church, this day as a Candidate for Matrimony with Miss *Cornelia Van Alstine* of Kinderhook. This will be handed to you by my Brother who will wait until you may be pleased to furnish him with a certified copy thereof.

" I am Sir

" With Sentiments of Esteem your Very h:ble Sert,

" HENRY H. VAN RENSSELAER.

" East District of the Manor of Rensselaer-Wyck, May 27th,  
1786.

" *To the Rev. Dr. Romine.*"

This was the oldest son of my great-uncle Hendrick. He died in 1795 at the age of thirty. His

signature recalls the custom of the Dutch to give their children only *one* Christian name. To distinguish them from others of the same name they added their father's name with the suffix *sen*, *i. e.*, "son." Thus, my grandfather was known as Kilian Killiansen, and his brother as Hendrick Killiansen, whose son became Henry or Hendrick Hendricksen.

Their zeal for religion was shown in setting "first and foremost" among the "Points proposed" to Commanders Evertsen and Benckes "for the maintenance and preservation of the rights of the town of Beverwyck and Fort Orange," "most seriously to request that the Officers and Justices of Fort Orange and Beverwyck aforesaid may be upright protectors of the true Reformed Religion, according to the Ordinances of beloved Fatherland. 2dly. That conscience shall not be subjected to any constraint," "but that every one shall be at liberty to go where he pleases to hear the Word of God;" which were both granted.

The Dutch colonists brought with them also their national Church, which was Presbyterian in its ministry and Calvinistic in its doctrines, as declared in the Dordrecht Confession. "Vaderlandt" supplied them with ministers, among whom were many godly, devoted and learned men, an honor to their calling and excellent examples to a people who greatly needed them in their exile from the influences and restraints of their old home, and thrown among wild savages and reckless adventurers. The heathenism and barbarism of "the Wilden," as they called the Indians, their degraded ignorance and slavery to lustful and devilish passions, awakened their zeal for their conversion, so that many were won to the Christian

faith and baptized by them. They used a liturgy in public worship, as did all the reformed churches on the Continent, and kept Christmas, Easter or *Paas*, and Whitsunday or *Pingster*. In rejecting Popery they had retained their patron saint, Saint Nicholas, so dear to children under his familiar name of Santa Claus. Marriages, baptisms, and funerals were celebrated with great care and formality, and no more serious offence could be given than a neglect to invite to them any one entitled to come, or a neglect of the invitation. They were most particular in their preparation for the "Heylige Nachtmæl" (Holy supper), and in their conduct after receiving it. The first Patroon took early steps to provide religious ministrations for his colonists, and secured in Domine Johannes Megapolensis "a good, honest and pure preacher," "a faithful servant of the Gospel of the Lord," as he was certified by his brethren in Amsterdam; and he commemorated the year of his arrival by inscribing his name on the corner-stone of the first Van Rensselaer mansion in America, the "New Crailo," at Greenbush, built in the same year, where it may still be seen. "He must have been a man of zeal and devotion of more than ordinary character, to have been willing to leave a sphere of usefulness and honor in his native land for the perils of the sea, and the toils and privations of a small colony in an unknown land, in the midst of savages." Soon after his arrival he found an occasion for a most brave and disinterested deed of charity in concealing Father Jogues, a Jesuit missionary, who had been captured, tortured and brought to Albany by the Mohawks to be put to death, and in eventually securing his ransom. He

served seven years at Beverwyck and the "Colonie," and then was settled twenty years in New Amsterdam, where he closed his labors and "in den Heere gerust" (rested in the Lord), as our forefathers beautifully recorded a Christian's departure. Rest in peace.

## CHAPTER FIFTH.

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### COLONEL KILIAEN VAN RENSSELAER — BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS OF HIS SON KILLIAN — COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE.

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My great-grandfather, Colonel Kiliaen (or as it was generally spelled, Killian) Van Rensselaer, was the youngest son and the youngest child of Hendrick and Catharine Van Bruggen Van Rensselaer, and was born in 1717. He married January 7, 1742, Harriet (Ariantje), daughter of Nicholas Schuyler, the record of which is in his own hand:

“1742, January 7, Ben Ich Getrout met Ariantie Schuyler, Van Dom. Van Santvort. De Here hoop Ich sal ons segenen.”

“1742, January 7, I was married to Harriet Schuyler by Dominie Van Santfort. The Lord I hope will bless us.”

Their children were Hendrick, Philip, Nicholas, Kiliaen; Catharine, married to William Ludlow; Elsie, married to Abraham A. Lansing; and Maria, married to Leonard Gansevoort, Junior.

“October 19, 1763, Is myne Vrow in Den Heren gerust. Godt hoop Ich heft haere Siele aengenomen! Mart 6, 1720, Zonden Steyle, was myne Vrow geboren.” “October 19, 1763, my wife slept in the Lord. May God, I pray, accept her soul! March 6, 1720, Old Style, was my wife born.” Thus my

grandfather lost his mother before he was five months old.

A curious reminiscence of this period of my great-grandfather's life is the following account rendered by his physician, which for conciseness, reasonableness and patient waiting was surely never surpassed:

“ Killian Van Renselier To

Jacob Roseboom, Dr.

for Servise as Doctor from the Year 1742 to the Year 1764 is Twenty two years a 12sh per annum.

£13. 4. 0.”

He married a second time, September 18, 1769, taking as his wife Maria Low. They had no children, and she survived him.

His commission as Second Lieutenant in his brother's company of foot is dated November 30, 1743, and signed by George Clinton, Royal Governor of the Province of New York; and his commission as Colonel is dated April 1, 1778, and signed by George Clinton, Governor of the State of New York. Both of these documents are deposited in the State Library at Albany.

He left an account-book kept in Dutch, which contains amusing as well as interesting items. We learn from it that his “ Suster Elisabet Richard,” to whom the letter of Anthony was addressed in 1753, was living in 1778. The name “ Jan Baptist ” reappears, 1747, in a cousin of his, son of the Patroon. “ Aunt Schuyler ” is entered under her true name “ Maragrita,” not “ Catalina,” as erroneously stated by Mrs. Grant. A charge for forage furnished in 1777-8, is entered against “ The Continent or United States.”



Proper names were not always necessary for identification in those primitive days, as the following entries show:

“ 1773, March 27. Housen the Leather-Breeches Maker, Dr.

To 3 Deer skins for breeches for me & Nicholas, and one goat skin to dress for Gloves, and Dr. to the meat of the goat for making the breeches, 10s.—.”

“Anthony the Shoemaker, 1776.” “*Franswa* (the Frenchman *François*) 1778.” “the Young Man that mowed Grass, 1780.” “Patterson the Carpenter, 1780.”

He “slept in the Lord” December 28, 1781, leaving to his children an unblemished reputation for integrity, honor and patriotism. He was buried beside his wife in the family cemetery at Greenbush on the banks of the Hudson.

My grandfather, Killian K. Van Rensselaer, was born June 9, 1763, in the old mansion at Greenbush, the home of his elder uncle, Johannes; and was baptised on the 12th by Dominie Westerlo, his cousin Volkert P. Douw and his Aunt Gertruij Van Rensselaer being his Godparents. His sister Maria (Mrs. Gansevoort) born September 2, 1760, is recorded by my great-grandfather Kiliaen as “de Ersten die Dominie Westerlo gedopt”—the first baptised by him after his coming to Albany. He lost his mother (Ariantje, daughter of Nicholas Schuyler) a few months afterwards. Of course he had no recollection of her, but, although he habitually kept his feelings under restraint and seldom indulged in emotion or in the “melting mood,” admiring rather Indian stoicism, he told me when I was asking him about “Old Dinah,”

named by Mrs. Grant as one of Aunt Schuyler's pets, that he had never been more moved than when she had told him in his boyhood that she had often scrubbed the floor with his mother a babe on her back; it being the custom for the "mammies" then to fasten the children on their backs, as the squaws did their papooses, while they scrubbed the floors with long-handled brushes.

He had just completed his twelfth year when the battle of Bunker's Hill, following so closely on Lexington and Concord, aroused the nation to the serious contest that had been forced upon it by the violent and unconstitutional measures of George III and his ministers, to compel the Colonies to be taxed for imperial purposes, without being represented in Parliament. It was a contest which concerned not the United Colonies only, but all the Provinces of the British Empire equally, and never since the conflict ended in the independence of the United States has the government of Great Britain undertaken to tax a Colony without its consent. The agitation and excitement around him were intense. Philip Schuyler and Abraham Ten Broeck were the leading spirits at Albany, and they were ardent patriots. Lieutenant-Governor Cadwallader Colden informed the Earl of Dartmouth, April 4, 1775, that "the present representatives of the Manors (Rensselaerswyck and Claverack) have distinguished themselves in the opposition to government, and were the warmest supporters of the Congress." The Van Rensselaers were all ardent patriots during the Revolutionary war. In this they had nothing to gain and every thing to lose, so far as their personal interests were concerned. But

like Washington, Schuyler, the Van Cortlandts, the Livingstons, the Clintons, they chose the side of their country, with all its hazards and privations. At that momentous time there were eighteen males of the name, of whom four were boys, and two were old men unable to endure military service. The remaining twelve bore commissions in all the grades of the service, of whom four were of my grandfather's immediate kindred. His father was Colonel of the 4th Albany Regiment; his brother Hendrick was Lieutenant-Colonel; his brother Philip was military storekeeper, a most responsible post, at Albany; and his brother Nicholas became Captain in Van Schaick's 1st New York Regiment (Notitia E.); he himself being at the time a schoolboy. His mind was filled with the reminiscences of those days, which he was fond of telling to all who liked to listen. When the battle of Bemis Heights was fought he was bathing in the Hudson at Albany, and heard the cannonading twenty-two miles away.\*

The sufferings and privations of officers and men were inconceivable as the war continued. A Rhode Island regiment sent to winter at Albany were reduced to such straits in clothing that they were forced to march in close column to conceal their nakedness from spectators! He was much displeased when the "Burgesses' Corps" adopted a scarlet uniform, say-

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\* As the possibility of the firing at Saratoga being heard as far as Albany has been doubted, I will state what he repeatedly told me about it. He said that he was bathing at Greenbush on the day of the battle of Saratoga and heard the cannonade distinctly. His brother Nicholas was on the staff of General Schuyler, and with the curiosity of a boy (he was then fourteen) he went up to the army, and received from his brother the same welcome that David got from his (1 Sam. xvii, 28). But the soldiers took charge of him and carried him to see the surrender of Burgoyne's army. He had left home in his haste wearing light shoes, and as they forded the creek on the march he was toted across by the good-natured fellows to save him from wetting his feet. His memory of the events of that period seemed to be particularly vivid, and naturally so, as they occurred so near his home, and his father, three brothers and many relatives were in the army.

ing that they could never have done it if they had seen, as he had, the misery and terror produced by the British and Hessians in the Revolution, with whom that color was indelibly associated in his mind. His father was chairman of the "Committee of Public Safety" at Albany, which was a sort of "Vigilance Committee" to protect the people from robbers, spies, tories, and dangerous characters generally, and secure tranquility, till the government of the States were organized by their Conventions. A boyhood passed amid so many perils and such constant excitement and alarms, must have received peculiar and lasting impressions. Albany was a place greatly exposed to attack, although never actually reached by the enemy. It was surrounded by enemies on the north and west, and required a constant guard. Being a frontier town, it was the resort of troops and officers going and coming, and had all the dangers with little of "the pomp and circumstances of glorious war." Hence there were developed, with his humor and vivacity, a habit of close observation of men and things, a reserve and cautiousness in expressing opinions, a serious and thoughtful demeanor, and a prudent frugality. The opportunities for schooling must have been imperfect, and it proves his natural ability and his application, that he was able under such disadvantages to acquire so good an education.

Four years of the war had passed when he was entered at Yale College, then under the presidency of Dr. Ezra Stiles, author of "Stiles' Judges," in which appears a letter of my great-grandmother Watkins claiming descent from Solicitor Coke, of which I confess that I am not so proud as she was,

dear soul, since he was one of the chief agents in the death of Charles I, which no plea for freedom could justify, in my opinion. There my grandfather made acquaintance with the famous Timothy Dwight, afterwards President of the college; boarding at the house of Mrs. Dwight, whose husband had lost his life from fever in an attempt to establish himself at New Orleans. Young Dwight was a chaplain in the army, and was afterwards settled at Greenfield not far from Bridgeport. He retained his youthful regard for him through life, always expressing the great admiration he felt for him, and buying all his books, which he presented to me.

The earliest record of this period is the following letter, which proves the affectionate interest of his brother Philip for the young collegian:

It is endorsed, "Received this Letter at Northampton together with 200 New Emission Dollars by Mr. Barton. January 25th, 1782.

"KILLIAEN K. VAN RENSSELAER."

"DEAR BROTHER:

"I received your favours by Mr. Barton. He is much of a gentleman, and I believe a great friend of you: at Least he has a great regard for you. I could wish you to take his advice for one on all occasions when you want any. You say that you have taken an unexpected journey with your Cousin Jack, and that you only lost three weeks of your vacancy, and that you should improve the remainder three weeks at your studies. I am well persuaded you do not want to take any advantage of a vacation, as you have no time to lose. Our father and myself have no objections that you have taken this journey; but I must most earnestly beg you not to do it again, nor Loose any time in your Studies. Time is moving away very fast, and it is at present very expensive to travel. There will be time after you have been thro' College to see the world; and in a few



Months you may see the greater part of the Country, and be acquainted with all the fashions. And by all means think of no other place than New Haven College. Mr. Maggs you are sensible will be your friend. I am requested by the old Gentleman to send 100 Dollars, New Emission, of which I have added 100 more, which makes 200 dollars, which you will receive by Mr. Barton ; and take his advice and opinion of the money, whether it is Like to fall or no. I shall charge the old gentleman with this money, of which you will have to pay part in a future day. It is needless for me to say that you must be very careful of it, for I am well persuaded that you never had an inclination to dive into Needless Expenses. Let me recommend you to keep out of Compy., whilst you are at your studies: in particular keep no Compy. with any girls or women; for to many temptations will offer for young Gentlemen, which may turn out to your Ruin for Ever. I am in the greatest hopes that you may turn out to be an honour to our family; and be assured that you will be supported in your Education; and after you come out of College you will have an opportunity of travelling and seeing fashion and Mankind. I now live in town again. Maria was very ill last night, but something better this morning. She and Betsy and all our children join in Compliments to you, and please to present my best respects to the good family of Mrs. Dwight, and believe me to be your affectionate Brother and Humble Servt.,

“ P. VAN RENSSELAER.

“ K. K. VAN RENSSELAER.”

Stephen, who by his father's early death had become Patroon, and John Jeremiah, his cousin Jeremiah's son, were students at Harvard College; and this led to his making acquaintances in Cambridge, and acquiring friends in Boston, when visiting them. Among these was Harrison Gray Otis, then a student in Harvard, who afterwards acquired office and fame in the government of the State and the Nation. He became a lawyer, was chosen a representative in the 5th and 6th Congresses, and a Senator in Congress, and

held many offices of trust and honor during his long and eventful life, having besides been the promoter and president of the famous Hartford Convention, by which he unwittingly destroyed the Federalist party, to which he belonged. A correspondence sprang up between the two collegians of which some fragments survive, giving us glimpses of their respective characters. Some one has said that a better idea of a person's character may be formed from the letters addressed to him than from his own epistles. I think I realize the truth of this saying in reading Otis' letters to his "Dear Killion," which are far beyond the average of a college junior's epistles. They realize to the full all that my grandfather used to lay down as essential to a "gentlemanly letter"—written in a neat, distinct, easy hand; clear and elegant in style and composition; humorous and playful, with shrewd and just observations on men and characters; cordial and winning in their sentiments and expressions; full of good common sense, with plenty of fun and gayety suitable to their years and pursuits; their pedantic, student-like "composition" style amuses more than offends. The impression which they give of his Yale correspondent is that of a warm-hearted, good fellow, gay and sprightly, delighting in a joke, fond of ladies' society, handsome and engaging, and a general favorite among his companions. In looking over these worn and tattered relics of more than a century ago, one is tempted to fall into the Harvard man's conventional strain and moralize on the value which Time imparts to even the most trivial things. How amazed and perhaps amused would Otis of the Junior class, have been, could he have imagined as he



sat at his table in Harvard hall composing his off-hand letters with the aid of the "midnight oil," that they were to be perused as studies of character by the grandson of his "dear friend Killion" in this year of grace 1888! Fancy the extra polish that would have been put on his phrases, the extra rotundity on his periods, by which they would have been utterly spoiled, and made useless for our purpose by their artificiality and unreality. To adopt his own method and quote Latin, in letter-writing as in all things else:

" Prudens futuri temporis exitum  
Calignosa nocte premit deus  
Ridetque, si mortalis ultra  
Fas trepidat."

" The issues of the future a wise God  
Veils in the dark impenetrable night,  
And smiles if mortals stretch  
Care beyond bounds to mortal minds assigned "

And so the "affectionate friend" "cast his bread upon the waters" of Father Time, and here are some of the crumbs:

" CAMBRIDGE, April 8, 1782.

" Is it possible, my dear Killion, that my Epistle had not come to hand when you dated your last? The Apprehension of the Miscarriage of that Letter subjects me to Anxiety and Solicitude, lest the Presumption of my Disregard should make an unfavorable Impression upon your Mind and I by that Mean incur the Loss of your Friendship, which circumstances have taught me to Prize, and which I dare say Experience will teach Me to consider as inestimable. The mere Suggestion of any Impairment of my Esteem for you, wounds the feelings of a Heart which beats warm with Friendship. But I am happy in the Reflection that your Suspicions must originate from your Fears, and was you not affectionate you would not be jealous."

He had no respect for pretenders, and summons all the resources of the Johnsonian vocabulary and style to show them up :

“There is no Class of Men who deserve the Contempt of the World more than those who deviate in a very great Degree from the Sphere which Nature has formed for Them, and assume Characters which are beyond the extent of their circumscribed Ability; For while they are conscious of their Inferiority, they at the same time think the magisterial Importance of an Adept is requisite for the maintenance of their Dignity. But the Eye of Penetration can pierce with facility the specious Vizard, and under this Disguise discover the supercilious Arrogance of the Pedant, which is easily discriminable from the conscious Dignity of the Man of real Merit.”

Whew!—well, at all events, he did not think that this elaborate and withering delineation was applicable to “dear Killion;” but was entirely sure of his sympathy and concurrence.

“From grave to gay,” he goes on, and gives his correspondent some information which shows that things were pretty much the same as they are now.

“I perceive by your last that you have formed erroneous Ideas of the System of Government in our Boarding Schools. But as to one Point I can inform you, that the circumspective Caution of the Governesses prohibits the Access of young Gentlemen to Tea and Chat unless some plausible Pretence for visiting them occurs. The Relations of the young Ladies and the Favorites of the Old Ones are always welcome; but should the Lads make a general Practice of frequenting these Houses they would soon find the Lady of the House would give Them a Hint. Under these Circumstances you see that one Principal Avenue to an intimate Acquaintance with these Misses is entirely obstructed. But as far as it is in my Power to Remedy the Loss of this Pleasure by meeting Them in the Public Rooms, so far will I avail Myself of the Opportunity, & think the Obligation on my Side.”

“It was a Maxim with a great Man,” he wrote June 20, 1782, “that Friends should see each other but seldom if they wished to preserve their Friendship entire. This is a Speculation too much refin’d for the Comprehension of my Capacity; and so little does it comport with my Sentiments that could I always be with my dear Killion, I would risque being cloyed with his Society.” “You are peculiarly fortunate, as you can secure what Conquests you please. For my own Part I remain the Same, and God has been kind enough to grant Me the Enjoyment of ‘Otium cum Dignitate,’ *i. e.*, the Privilege of eating my Bread and Milk in State. The Ingredients of my Composition are a little Honesty and a large Share of Awkwardness, two Qualifications requisite to go thro’ the World. I am free from Sensibility, from all Sympathies and Antipathys, except an irreconcilable Aversion to the Myriads of Puppys who ‘flaunt in Silk and flutter in Brocade;’ but this proceeds only from Envy, nor is it strange; for my honest Boorishness makes no Figure, merely because it is not decorated by a red Coat and silk Breeches; — Alas, poor Toby! But in regard to the Ladies, although my *Capers* of Gallantry do not come in competition with those of *Beau Nash*, yet without arrogance I may pretend to a Share of their Esteem, for I am a *good-natured fellow*, and they can do what they’ve a Mind to Me, and say what they please before Me; and lest you should conclude that this Pretension is founded upon Vanity, I can assure you I never *leave* their Company but they appear perfectly well pleased with Me. This they discover by a thousand little Assiduities and Attentions; one reaches my hat; another in kind Compassion asserts it must be past 10, while Rebel Conscience says, ‘You lie, Miss’ — (He’s not a very polite young Fellow, and therefore most Ladies have nothing to do with this Conscience) — but, *as I was saying*, a third springs up to hold the Candle, and a fourth reverentially shuts the Door on my Back with an inexpressible grace: — O the Creatures! But I believe you are satiated with Nonsense;

“Quanquam ridentem dicere Verum  
Quid vetat.”

(Though what hinders one to be merry and tell the truth?)

“Now for a little ill nature. D—— continues to flutter in the *Beau Monde*, with the Superciliousness of a Fop and the sophisticated Ostentation of a Pedant. while he

thinks the Tinsel of a gay Coat and a large Stock of futile Compliments are a Compensation for the Vacuity of his Perecranium. But unless his Idea-Box is better stored than I at present imagine, he will never thunder in the Areopagus of his Country, however he may lighten in a Lady's drawing Room. You see I'm not a fashionable Painter; I only delineate the Features with Exactness, and leave the Drapery to your Cousin Stephen."

They seem to have made an excursion together to Middletown, and enjoyed the hospitality of General Parsons, of which the Bostonian had carried away a lively recollection, especially of the good cheer which they had been feasted on. He betrays a strong leaning to the "Sodality of Roast-Piggy-Wiggies," founded, according to Charles Lamb, by the "Heathen Chinees," of which Alderman Brasher, of the New York Common Council, was a shining light; who, as reported by my Uncle Richard, while riding with a friend through a remote part of Franklin county, suddenly exclaimed, as they drew near a settler's house about noon, "Stop! I smell roast-pig, and I never can pass by a house where I can get roast-pig!" Thus Otis revealed his qualifications for membership in that ancient Order of Gourmands:

"Have you heard from Genl. Parson's Family? He's a worthy Character; nor do I think the Skill of the Female Part of it in roasting Pig is any Derogation from their Dignity. Had I been as indifferent to Port Wine upon a certain day as I have been ever since, his Honor would have saved three Bottles at least."

On his way back to the classic shades of his Alma Mater he met with an adventure which shows that Athletics were in full vogue there at that day as they are now.

“Have you received any News of a great blue-stocking Hero, who threatened to put me out of Window? I must have hurt him exceedingly; but it was not one of my affable Moments. He swore to prosecute me the next day, and so I flogged him till he revoked his Promise. I generally find myself much embarrassed in Country Towns; for if a person comes from *Boston Town* they always think him as proud as Lucifer, whether he is really so, or not. I believe you and I have not incurred that imputation at Gen. P——’s.”

In “A Legacy of Historical Gleanings,” pages 78 and 79, is given a letter from my grandfather to his brother, Colonel Philip Van Rensselaer, informing him “that his health had been much impaired of late;” and that the Doctor had told him that his “Disorder had arisen from a sedentary life.” He had also written it to his “Fidus Achates,” with divers results; grief tenderly expressed—a diagnosis skillfully performed—a prescription judiciously given—and some sage advice to profit withal.

“BOSTON, July 31-82.

“MY DEAR KILLION:

“With the most tender Solicitude did my Feelings vibrate in Unison with yours, which were so sensibly expressed in your last. The pathetic Terms in which you declared your Illness were Daggers to my Heart; Friendship took the Alarm, and the creative Power of Imagination harrassed your Friend with her Retinue of visionary Evils. Did I say ‘visionary?’ I did; but they can only be so while my Killion’s Health continues. ‘The Assurance of Ellison that your sickness had by no means kept Pace with your Apprehensions has had a great Tendency to dispel the Clouds of Sorrow which seemed ready to open their Sluices upon my Head. The Reluctance you experienced at leaving the Boston Road made you Fancy yourself more indisposed than you was in Reality; that is to say, you have the Vapours, those Hellhounds of Imagination who continually excite a Demoniack Train of Horrors in your Mind.



‘ ac Bellua Lernaë  
Horrendum stridens, flammisque armata Chimæra,  
Gorgones, Harpiæque, et Forma tricornis Ubræ.’

“(Lerna’s hydra hissing dreadful, and Chimera armed with flames; Gorgons, Harpies, and the form of the three-bodied ghost), all these are the fruitful Progeny of the Vapours. Notwithstanding this a great Attention to your Health is absolutely requisite. I have long been subject to the same Complaints.”

Having made this learned and elaborate diagnosis, with the aid of an entirely new authority in Therapeutics, Dr. Publius Virgilius Maro, some time of the Roman Faculty, he proceeds to give his patient the prescription :

“Temperance and Attention to Diet will do more, will effect more than all the Medicine in the Universe; and, as Commodore Trunnion said, when a man’s hour is come, what signifies his hauling off with a Potheary’s Shop in his Hold? Don’t have much to do with the Faculty; drink Milk Mornng and Evng; eat your Dinner as usual; and get on Horseback as often as possible. These Prescriptions will be of no avail if you do not entirely relinquish the Flute; Even a Tune once a Week will be very disserviceable; This last injunction is indispensable, as is likewise the Necessity of furnishing yourself with a high reading Desk at which you may stand when at your Studies. This advice is the Result of Experience, and although it is not shrouded in technical terms, nor patronizd by hardmouthd Polysyllables; although it is not ushered in by Cataplasms, Boluses, Concatenations and catocathartics; yet it profiteth much and is not evilly to be intreated.”

There was gayety among the descendants of the Pilgrims, when he wrote from Cambridge, February 10, 1783, in a moralizing strain :

“The Capital is filled with uninterrupted Scenes of Dissipation, the Round of Balls, Concerts & Assemblies is continual, and it would seem as if these pleasures must soon cloy, since, although they are in some degree diversified, yet the *Rotine* is so rapid that they may almost be termed uniform. Experience however evinces the contrary. The

Men of Pleasure pant for Pastime, and if it can be denominated Diversion the Insipidity of it is no objection. I am sorry your little Couzin is gone ; she is celebrated in Boston for that prettiness of Behavior and Sweetness of Disposition, which is distinct from the flutter of the Coquet and the Affectation of females in general ; my best Compliments await her—you may mention me to the other Ladies. Why does not Stephen write me ? surely he cannot plead the Want of Leisure."

But Commencement was at hand, and it is interesting to learn that they were pretty much the same as they are now.

"BOSTON, July 10, 1783.

"As I flatter myself you are not disinterested in my occupations, I proceed to inform you of my Situation. Commencement will happen upon the ensuing Week. The presence of my Friend would give a double Zest to the pleasures which will attend my *Emancipation* from the University. The Government have assigned me the most distinguished Post in the public performances. Their Motives for this are inscrutable. I have little to claim upon the Score of Merit, less upon that of favor ; and can only ascribe this Manoeuvre to the capricious Spirit which characterizes all their proceedings. Such is the Nature of my Connections that I am necessitated to make a nonsensical parade ; I shall give a ball on the subsequent day, I wish you could be here to open it.

"After the Bustle of Commencement shall subside, I propose to myself a vigorous Application to the Study of the Law. If I mean to be imminent I must remedy Deficiency of Genius by Intensity of Pursuit. I shall go into Mr. Lowell's Office, and if I can ever attain competence and honorable fame, it will be easy to define the Boundaries of my Wishes."

"My sincere regards attend your little angel Neice ; her amiable Disposition will make those her friends who are less intimately connected with her cousin Killion. Inform her, Miss Williams is six feet high, Cushion and all, that she wears high-heeld shoes, and is (as the Yankees say) grown out of all Knowledge. I will deliver her commands. Adieu, my dear Killion ; believe me yours invariably,

OTIS."



Killian did not return to New Haven after his Junior year, having lost his father in 1782. General Schuyler, whose wife, "beautiful Katrina Van Rensselaer," was his own cousin, made him his private secretary.

In this position he was brought into an embarrassing situation, involving a conflict between his duty to his patron and his duty to his *patroon*. The latter was in love with Margaret Schuyler, daughter of the General, and although only nineteen was anxious to be married. To this the father objected, and the young couple settled the matter by getting married without delay.

Harrison Gray Otis predicted with wonderful accuracy what would be the results of this event in language which showed a very correct knowledge of human nature in a youth of eighteen or nineteen. "Stephen's precipitate Marriage has been to Me a Source of Surprise and indeed of Regret. He certainly is too young to enter into a connection of that kind; the period of his Life is an important Crisis; it is the Time to acquire fame, or at least to prepare for the acquisition; it is the Time to engage in busy Life, to arouse the Facultys into action, to awake from a lethargic Inattention which is generally a consequence of youthful pleasures, and make a figure upon the active Theatre. Instead of this our Friend has indulged the momentary Impulse of youthful passion and yeilded to the dictates of romantic Fancy."

The general's temper was none of the mildest, and he was greatly enraged at this defiance of his paternal authority, and vented his wrath upon his secretary, accusing him of having aided the escapade. He could not well deny having aided the courtship, which

was eminently proper in itself, however troublesome in its results; he had been under great obligations to his kinsman in his college course, and had a loyal feeling to him as the chief of the clan, and was besides a youth himself, and susceptible to the woes of distressed lovers. If he had arranged an interview or carried a note or two between his cousins he could not have suspected any harm in that when the parties were so eminently respectable and of the same blood; but he convinced General and Mrs. S. that he was innocent of all guilty knowledge beyond that degree. And so he was reinstated in the great man's favor, and had no reason to regret what had happened in its influence on his future career. He was trained up in the principles of the Federalists, the party of Washington, in which General Schuyler was a leader. I have seen the modern slang expression "machine" applied, in a letter written at his death, to the Federal party as managed by him. His impatience was so great, as my grandfather has told me, that in writing, after finishing a page, he would not wait to turn the sheet or cut it off carefully, but would tear it off and throw it on the floor for some one to pick up. But he was one of the greatest characters that this nation has produced. At that early day he planned the great system of internal improvements which the State of New York has carried out in its canals, and formed a company which laid the foundation for them by improving the navigation of the inland lakes and streams. He planned the campaign that resulted in the capture of Burgoyne and his army, although he was not allowed to carry it out; giving nevertheless the benefit of his unstinted

aid and counsel to General Gates, by whom he was superseded. In this he showed patriotism and magnanimity of the highest order, for subsequently Gates proved himself to be vastly his inferior as a commander. My grandfather has told me that General Schuyler was an unbeliever in the Christian religion till the latter years of his life, when he frankly avowed his error and announced his belief in Christianity. This was a great step for him, and a hard one for such a leader of men, especially in that day, when infidelity was more fashionable than it has been since.\*

After pursuing the proper studies he was admitted an attorney in the Supreme Court of the State of New York, his license being signed by Richard Morris, Chief Justice, and dated 30th October, 1784. He entered on the practice of the law in Claverack, Columbia county, where his brother-in-law, William Ludlow, who married his sister Catharine, resided. He became district attorney for the county, and must have enjoyed a profitable practice. He received his license as counsellor-at-law the 6th November, 1790, from Chief Justice Robert Yates. Having a taste for military duties, he had been commissioned as brigade inspector by Governor George Clinton, 27th December, 1786. His position and duties brought him into connection with the most distinguished men of the time, as well as with many rising men of his own age, who afterwards filled a large place in the history of

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\*The Indians gave General Schuyler the name "Ta-ha ne-ye-a-ta-kán-ye," literally "Ancient his legs." This was a strange title for one of the most impatient, active and enterprising of men, of whom it never could be said, as of old Laertes, that "weariness took hold of his limbs as he crept along the fruitful soil" of his Saratoga domain. Perhaps the Mohawk warriors had observed that "Quider's" legs were not as nimble as their own when it became prudent to retire before the enemy and get behind trees, of which they were never slow to avail themselves. To General Washington they gave the more dignified and appropriate title, "An-na ta-káu-les," "Taker of towns." ("Memoir, etc.," by Egbert Benson.)

the nation, and laid the foundation of many lasting friendships. One day I was standing looking at books in Putnam's store in New York, when a venerable gentleman of distinguished air came up to me and said, "Are not you a grandson of Killian K. Van Rensselaer?" On my replying "Yes," he said, "I am Chancellor Kent, and an old friend of your grandfather's." I was so taken aback by being thus accosted by so eminent a man that I lost my balance and could only say, "I have often heard my grandfather speak of you, Chancellor Kent." To which he answered, in his quick, jerky way, "I have no doubt you have heard him speak of Chancellor Kent," and thereupon left me, leaving me in great doubt whether my stupid awkwardness had not marred his estimation of my lineage.

## CHAPTER SIXTH.

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### MARRIAGE AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

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Killian K. Van Rensselaer was married January 27, 1791, to Margaretta Sanders, daughter of John Sanders, of Scotia, and cousin of his brother Philip's wife.

Just previous to this he had been called to Albany, having received from the Patroon the following notice of the death of the estimable Dominie by whom he and his sister Maria had been baptized, and who had married the Patroon's mother.

"ALBANY, December 27, 1790.

"DEAR SIR—It pleased God to take to Himself our father Doctor Westerlo, on Sunday afternoon at half-past one o'clock. The family intend to Inter him on Wednesday next, at two o'clock, and request your attendance.

"Your Humble Servant,

"STEPHEN V. RENSSELAER,

"In behalf of the family.

"KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER, Esq.,

Claverack."

On his marriage my grandfather settled in Albany, and received his license to practice in the Mayor's Court of the city of Albany, 28th of March, 1791, signed by Abm. Yates, Jr., Mayor. The following ten years, I think, were the happiest for himself and his family in all their experience. Five children were born to them, one of whom, however, Deborah, named after my grandmother's mother, was taken

away in infancy. Their residence was at first in State street near the "Old Elm Tree" on the corner of Pearl street. The homestead, 112 State street was begun in 1801, at the same time that Philip S. Van Rensselaer, the Mayor, built his house on the corner of Chapel street, now belonging to Erastus Corning. While it was building they lived for a time on the corner of Lodge street. In this mansion the front room on the first floor was "the office," in which, as I recollect it, my grandfather might generally be found seated in quiet dignity, reading or conversing with a visitor, who had come in familiarly to see him and have a friendly chat. In the rear was the living room, where my grandmother could always be found, her delicate health confining her much to the house. The little room beside this, now a butler's pantry, was the dining-room, and there I remember first seeing a "Nott stove," the original "base-burner," which first brought anthracite coal into use for domestic purposes. Between the front office and the back room was the bedroom, in which stood the family "kas," on which always stood a basket of the reddest, juiciest and richest-flavored Spitzenberg apples from the Scotia orchard, for the children whenever they might come in. The climb for those apples on the "kas" helped to show how much we grew every year. The back room was the scene of the annual family dinner, at which all, old and young, were assembled. A mystery hung over the upper stories of the house, on which were the parlor and drawing-room, kept carefully closed according to the Dutch tradition, and never opened except on state occasions, for family gatherings and the most distinguished guests. On



the second floor was "Uncle Sanders' room," so-called because he always occupied when in town this particular apartment, now the bath-room. On the third story the large back room was "the boys' room," and when the four were together there was life in it. The windows of this room give a magnificent view down the Hudson. My uncle Richard told me of a good thrashing which he brought on himself from the paternal hand for opening a Fourth of July by firing a gun from the window. The front room on this floor was the spare bedroom, devoted generally to the Dominies who came from a distance to attend Classis or Synod; while the hall-room was designated as "the girls' room," being devoted to the use of my grandmother's nieces, "Cousin Betsy" (Mrs. Anderson) and "Cousin Katy" (Mrs. Beekman), when they came to town for shopping or amusement. It is a curious fact about the old house that no marriage ever took place in it, no bride ever went from it, and no child has been born in it.

One of the most pleasing traits which this period of my grandfather's life developed was his interest in the prosperity of his nephews, and the reciprocal regard and confidence with which they repaid it. Bar-ent Sanders, oldest nephew of my grandmother, was much in their family, and a great favorite of both his uncle and aunt for his integrity and fidelity. He went to New York and became a clerk in the importing house of Leroy, Bayard, Ogden & Co. He related that while there he was present at a dinner at which Sir John Temple rose and said (he was British Consul-General): "Gentlemen, I propose the health of one of our guests whose modesty is only equalled by

his bravery — Major-General Maunsell;" which was drunk with all the honors. Solomon, eldest son of his brother Hendrick, was in the army under General Wayne engaged against the Indians in the west; but kept up a constant and voluminous correspondence with his uncle, which reveals how much he relied upon him for services which no one else could have rendered. Robert S., son of his brother Philip, who went to Europe in 1795, kept up a regular and affectionate correspondence with his uncle during his sojourn abroad. Advantage was taken of Robert's voyage to revive the intercourse with the Van Rensselaers in Holland, which had been suspended for a long period embracing the Revolution. It had been first renewed by Captain Killian H. Van Rensselaer, a nephew of my grandfather's, who had visited Holland in his ship, the *Minerva*, in 1794. He had been received with great kindness by his kinsmen across the sea, and had brought back friendly messages from them to the Van Rensselaers here, with the likenesses of some of them. To take advantage of this favorable beginning, my grandfather gave his nephew Robert a letter of introduction, which was to serve also as a formal family greeting to the kinsmen in the Fatherland, and to open the way to a renewal of intercourse between the two branches. The letter was as follows:

“AMERICA:

“ALBANY, NOV. 14, 1794.

“GENTLEMEN:

“I do myself the honor to address you by my nephew the bearer, Robert S. Van Rensselaer, a young gentleman of character and respectability. He will present you with the genealogy of our family in this country, accompanied

with a particular sketch of the individual situation of the male line to the age of twenty. And we must beg leave to refer you to him for further information respecting us; who will, we flatter ourselves, answer every expectation we (or you) may form of him.

“We were greatly gratified with the information communicated to us by our relation and friend, Killian H. Van Rensselaer, in the ship *Minerva*; particularly with your civility and attention towards him.

“We acknowledge the profiles, &c. conveyed by him, and we sincerely lament that there were not more of them. One was retained in the hands of the Revd. Dr. Livingston; two by Steven Van Rensselaer; and one by Philip S. Van Rensselaer.

“I rejoice at the opportunity that I now embrace of renewing that antient intercourse between our two families that has been suspended so long; and as the bearer is our organ and representative, you will excuse me from dwelling upon a subject that is personal or relating to any of us, as he will more forcibly evince to you our ardent desire of making ourselves known unto you in every respect.

“We all hope that our fears respecting the invasion of Holland by the French may soon be dissipated, and that you may not suffer any longer the calamities of War; but that you may enjoy the blessing and sweets of peace equal to ourselves.

“Should a combination of circumstances render it advisable for you to quit Holland, we must entreat you to repair to this Country, where you will find friends united to you by the strongest of ties. And even otherwise, should you escape the pending danger we shall be happy in a visit from you to this Country.

“I should consider it one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life if I could accomplish a tour to Holland; but as it would be incompatible with my situation and young family I can only anticipate the pleasure I shall receive from seeing some of you here very soon on a visit.

“You must pardon me from writing in the prevailing language of our Country, for altho’ we retain our Mother language, the Dutch, in all our families, so as to read and speak it in negotiating the ordinary routine of business, still few if any write it with fluency and correctness.

“Greet in our name all the friends and relations in Hol-

land, and rest assured that no one wishes more for your welfare and happiness than your kinsman and humble servt.,

“K. K. VAN RENSSELAER.

“Messrs. J. C. & S. VAN RENSSELAAR,  
“Amsterdam.”

This friendly overture brought in due time a corresponding reply, as follows, in the “mother language.”

“AMSTERDAM, April 17th, 1795.

“SIR AND COUSIN :

“These few lines will serve as an answer to your most agreeable favour of November 14th, 1794, which was handed to us by your and our cousin Robert S. Van Rensselaer, who is now in good health, and with whom we have had the good fortune to converse daily. During his stay here we have become very much attached to each other, so that we must see each other daily.

“We had expected ere long our Cousin Killiaan H. Van Rensselaar, whom we had known before; but have now heard from the above that he is in France.

“We cannot thank you enough for your friendly invitation, if matters in our country grow worse, to come to you. We hope they will soon be arranged, and do not doubt but our cousin who is now here will tell you more about it. Nothing would be more agreeable to us than to be of some service to you; but we cannot have that pleasure here. If you know of any thing in which we can serve you we cordially beg that you will make use of us.

“We hope these few lines may tend to further correspondence between us.

“From your letter we see that it is easier for you to write in English; that is very good, as we can easily get it translated here. And as we also see that you can read Dutch and understand it, and we cannot write English, we do so in Dutch.

“With this we close, and send greetings to all our friends and those we are related to in North America, and wish heartily every good thing to them.

(Signed)

“J. C. & S. VAN RENSSELAAR.”

Before this reply was received my grandfather had sent a further communication to them :

“ AMERICA :

ALBANY, March 15, 1795.

“ DEAR KINSMAN :

“ I wrote you last November by my brother's son, Robert S. Van Rensselaer, which letter was addressed to J. C. and S. Van Rensselaar, and which I hope has been delivered in *propria manu*.

“ We all fear by the time this reaches you your Country will be greatly convulsed by the Success of the French Arms ; and how far this may affect you for the better or for the worse we can not divine. We hope you will not be prejudiced thereby in the least ; and should you be we shall truly participate in your distresses, as well as commiserate your misfortunes.

“ I did not see my nephew, Killian H. Van Rensselaar, when he returned from Holland, as he sailed from New York soon after his arrival. He has been on a successful voyage, and has purchased part of a ship, which he commands, and has actually sailed for France, from whence he sails for Amsterdam. He furnished me with some letters which you and others did him the honor to write after he left your City and laid in the Texel. These letters, Sir, breathe true friendship and hospitality, and I can assure you they have made lasting impressions of gratitude on the young seaman, as well as his friends here. I hope that amiable lady that was sick, as well as A. Van Rensselaar, are recovered from their sickness, and that they have not experienced anything but ordinary inconvenience therefrom. Those letters, dear kinsman, caused tears to flow when they were read here, particularly from the parents of the young captain. They impart friendship which will ever unite our hearts with cords imperceptible yet indissoluble. I have questioned the captain about writing ; he gave for answer, he wanted only to communicate the contents of the ‘ Second Epistle of John, the 12th verse.’ I hope he will be with you in *propria persona* by June. This young seaman has acquired a reputation and character worthy of himself, and it is no small piece of gratification that he has acquired your confidence also.

“ Our political atmosphere was filled with *vapours* that foreboded *War*, but I can with pleasure advise that our Minister, Mr. Jay, has settled a treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation with Great Britain which will secure us the



blessings of peace. That this may be your happy lot with your enemies we sincerely pray. Our Country is rising in wealth and happiness beyond credibility. \* \* \*

It must, Sir, be no small pleasure to us when we reflect that *our* ancestors acted a principal part in settling this country and laying a foundation of Religion and Civil policy in that wilderness which now *rejoices* and *blossoms* as a rose. That you may avoid the further horrors of war, and sit down in a peaceable and good government, I shall ever pray for.

“ I shall rejoice to receive a line from you, and as many more as will take the trouble of entering into a friendly correspondence with me. Should you, Sir, find any difficulty in getting my letters translated, I shall in future endeavor to get them done here ; and at all events, I hope this will be no obstacle to either of us.

“ Deliver the enclosed to our nephew, and let our love and amity accompany it. I am anxious to hear from our friend Robert S. Van Rensselaer : if he should not have reached you owing to any accidents at sea, commit the enclosed to the flames.

“ Make my compliments acceptable to your worthy lady and family, and greet all our kinsmen with you in our name.

“ I am, Sir, with sentiments of Esteem and regard,

“ your relation and friend,

“ K. K. VAN RENSSELAAR.

“ JAN JAC : VAN RENSSELAAR.”

A curious episode occurred during the absence of Robert in Europe, in which the serious and the ludicrous were wonderfully combined, and which was a remarkable illustration of “ All’s well that ends well ! ” To appreciate it fully one must have known the chief actor in it. In a letter from London, February 6, 1797, Robert had written to his uncle :

“ After perusing my letters I immediately set off for Gravesend in hopes of meeting with my brother. My disappointment was inexpressible when told he was not on board the *Ellice*. On inquiry I found he had made application in an improper manner, not one of his friends accompanying him, or assisting him in obtaining a berth on board of a good ship, but left to himself, without even a friend to advise with.



This I deem very hard, and regret much that when I left America he did not accompany me, for by this time I should have obtained him a mate's situation, had he been deserving of it, which I have no doubt he would have been. If my better stars prevail, and I am once more landed in my native soil, he shall not want for that assistance the want of which has prevented my seeing him. The captain of the *Ellice* would have taken him if a proper application had been made by his friends, which I sincerely hope have not deserted him, as from the complexion of the transaction it appears."

He would have felt worse had he known all about his brother, and where he was at the time. Peter S. Van Rensselaer, or "Pappy Piet," as he was familiarly known, was a wild boy, and had enticed one of the family negroes, who were always restless and ready for an escapade, and the two got every thing ready to run away and go to sea, in the regular *Robinson Crusoe* style. "We had made satisfactory arrangements in our own way for that purpose," said "Cousin Peter," as we were taught to address him respectfully, "when my father, Philip Van Rensselaer, found us out, and being a man of great energy and decision of character, immediately notified us to get ready, and he would make us sailors to our hearts' content. So, after a few tears from mother, and earnest good-byes from other members of the family, we accompanied father to New York, where he placed Jack and myself under the charge of Captain Oglevie, of the good ship *Ocean Queen* bound from New York to London, loaded with flour, and especially enjoined the captain to make us both first-class sailors before the mast. And I do believe the captain gave us all the experience he knew how to; at least I was pleased when the *Ocean Queen* was captured in the British channel by a French privateer from St. Malo, subsequently

ascertained to belong to my brother Robert, who was then living in great splendor and extravagance at Paris. A portion of our ship's crew, including Captain Oglevie and myself, were retained on our own ship, and with a prize crew ordered to St. Malo. The rest of our ship's crew, including my black companion, were taken on board the privateer, and were never again heard from, the vessel having foundered and every soul lost. Our ship was re-captured by an English cruiser, and ordered into Dartmouth, where we duly arrived; and I with others was imprisoned for months. After treaty and long delay, and the earnest interference of our Consul at London, and John Jay, our Minister at St. James, myself and others were liberated, in great destitution; and I reached New York, after having worked my passage home, and an absence of nearly one year, to learn that my father had in the meantime died." As the ship on which he was returning, a wiser if not a more sober man, was drawing near her dock on the East river, two of his kinsmen, who happened at the time to be sauntering along the docks, descried him in the rigging, "a poor, begrimed, soiled, torn, hard-working sailor, looking as if friendless in the world." It was a joyous meeting, and having been transformed in their friendly hands into a clean and respectable citizen, he declared that he "never until now knew what it was to be perfectly happy." And he proved the reality of his conviction by going home in three days, and never leaving it except to marry his own cousin, Sarah Sanders, after the bad custom of too many of his family. "Cousin Sally" was a most estimable woman, loving and lovable, and a faithful and devoted

wife during many years of long-suffering patience. May she rest in peace, and perpetual light shine upon her.

My grandfather had made the journey to Niagara Falls on horseback through the wilderness, in company, I think, with General Schuyler. There was no wagon-road to it at that day. He had inherited the enterprising spirit of his ancestors, and was inclined to take advantage of an offer to share in the Phelps and Gorham purchase, the head-quarters of which were at Canandaigua. Had he done so the career of his family would have been of necessity entirely different. Robert Morris, the great financier of the Revolution, had purchased large tracts of land in the western part of the State, and he seems to have had a correspondence with him about the buying and settling of lands. He received from him the following letter :

“ PHILA., June 25, 1793.

“ SIR :

“ Your letter of the 14th inst. reached me a few days ago, and before I give a decided answer, I wish to see my son Thomas, who intends to be here in the course of next month. I shall converse with him respecting the sale of Lands in his Neighborhood, and if I am induced to make farther sales it will be upon the terms you mention, that is, that the purchaser shall make immediate Settlement.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your most obedient

“ hble Servant,

“ ROBT. MORRIS.”

He was deterred from it by the influence of his brother-in-law, Judge John Sanders, an able and intelligent man himself, but to whose vision that region seemed as distant as Alaska seems to us.

"*Swagger*" (brother-in-law) said he, "your children and your children's children will be old men and women before there are any roads through that country!" The old gentleman lived to see how erroneous his judgment had been, but it was too late. However, my grandfather extended his professional business in that quarter, where he had many correspondents. His business required journeys to the western parts of the State, which were made on horseback or in a gig, a very useful vehicle in those days. On one of these he heard cries of distress in the woods, and on following the sound discovered a rider mired in a bog, into which his horse was gradually sinking. With such branches and sticks as he found at hand he helped horse and rider out of their danger, which was imminent in that lonesome spot, and after receiving his grateful thanks passed on. Afterwards at an entertainment at Albany he was introduced to the famous Talleyrand, who had been driven from France by the excesses of the Jacobins, and recognized in him the traveler whom he had rescued! The Frenchman did not recognize him, and he, of course, did not allude to the obligation. What vast changes in the history of France, of Europe, and indeed of the world, might not have taken place but for that rencontre, and the rescue from a bog in the wilds of America of the man who became the Machiavellian minister of Napoleon!

There were no express companies then and no banks except in the cities, and in the course of these expeditions into the country for their clients lawyers were obliged to collect and carry along with them large sums of money, taking the risks of meeting

robbers. On one occasion, as my uncle Richard told me, when his father had taken him with him, they were obliged to transport in the gig a bag filled with silver collected on the expedition, which it was his business to carry in and out of the taverns where they lodged on their journey, and he had cause to remember that it was no easy burden to bear. But they brought it in safety to Albany.

His profession brought him into frequent correspondence with De Witt Clinton, then practicing law in New York. From several letters I give the following, as showing a friendly feeling that was kept up through life :

“DEAR SIR :

“I shall avail myself of your obliging offer to attend to such of my business in Albany as may be necessary, and hope that you will not be backward in requesting the like from me. “I am, Sir,

“With great esteem,

“Your most obedt. Servt.,

“22 June, 1792.

“DE WITT CLINTON.

“New York.”

Ambrose Spencer, afterwards the distinguished Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, was one of his most constant and familiar correspondents. The following is especially interesting as marking a step in the early career of one who afterwards became so eminent :

“HUDSON, July 27, 1793.

“I shall be up on Monday evening or Tuesday morning. I am determined to apply for my examination as Solicitor in Chancery and wish your Company upon the Examination, and more the better—mention it to the young Gentlemen entitled to Examination.

“I am yours sincerely,

“AMBROSE SPENCER.”



He was active in advancing the interests of his political party, and his advice was sought by leading Federalists.

“MANOR HOUSE, 24 Feby., 1792.

“Hope our friends were all well in New York. Let me know how matters stand respecting Governor. If Judge Yates will not oblige his friends and step forward in return for their exertions last time, I cannot see any probability of fixing on any other person that will answer the end proposed. Beg your thoughts and that of your Citizens on the Subject.

“Yours Sincerely,

“PETER R. LIVINGSTON.”

As Chairman of the Federal General Committee he signed an appeal to the people of the State, April 9, 1798, together with John C. Cuyler, A. Hun, S. Bleecker and C. R. Webster, to solicit their suffrages for their candidates at the coming election.

The Patroon was an active member of the Federalist party, of which his father-in-law, Gen. Schuyler, was the leader, and Alexander Hamilton, his brother-in-law, the great ornament and strength, by his great ability and distinguished services as a soldier and the founder and organizer of the Treasury Department of the United States. Mr. Van Rensselaer was a member of the State Legislature of 1795, and during its session in New York, then the capital, he wrote the following characteristic letter to one of his leading constituents, highly illustrative of the politics of the times:

“NEW YORK, March 18, 1795.

“DEAR SIR:

“I have received your letters, but being engaged daily, I have not answered them so soon as I ought. The money was very acceptable—indeed, if I remain here much longer I shall be obliged to mortgage the Manor. It gives me great pleasure to find that unanimity prevails in the County,



and particularly in my towns. You should not, however, relax in your exertions to continue it, for I apprehend every effort will be made previous to the Election to divide us. You will therefore take care to commit as many of the principal folks as possible.

"We shall adjourn the first week in April, and not sooner. I am sorry to hear that your mother is still indisposed. I hope the Journey has been of service to the Judge. Make my compliments to all the Family, and not forgetting Mr. Bassett.

"Mr. Jay has written to his friends here that he will sail in April; his letter was dated the 5 December. The greatest unanimity prevails here; we calculate on a majority of 1,000.

"Your Friend, &c.,

"S. V. RENSSELAER."

The aggressive course of the French Directory towards neutrals was resented by the United States in consequence of the great injury to their commerce, and preparations were made for war. General Washington was made Commander-in-chief, and Alexander Hamilton a Major-General. Gen. Hamilton made Philip S. Church, grandson of Gen. Schuyler, his aide-de-camp. More than fifty years afterwards he was at dinner at Miss Wadsworth's, afterwards Mrs. Murray, when she asked him, in my presence, why he was called "Captain" Church. "O," said he, "once a captain, always a captain. Gen. Hamilton made me his aide when we expected a war with France, and I have been a captain ever since."

My grandfather's patriotism and military ardor prompted him at this period to raise a company of volunteers among his fellow-citizens. The following is in his own handwriting, and signed first by him:

"We, the subscribers, do hereby promise and engage to form ourselves into a Company, to be called the "Albany Guards," and when forty subscribe, the company officers are

to be elected. The regulations respecting uniform and dress, together with the Rules for its discipline and police are to be agreed on by the Company.

“ July 27, 1798.”

He always held and inculcated that every citizen of the United States was a soldier when he could bear arms, and one of my earliest experiences was to be drilled by him in the manual of arms and the facings and steps of a soldier.

In those days every gentleman whose reputation was assailed was expected to vindicate it by “ calling out ” his assailant and fighting a duel with him. My great-uncle, John Sanders, and Abraham Van Vechten were shining lights of the Federalist party, but that did not prevent their having a disagreement, which became a question of veracity. My uncle was a man of high honor and jealous of his reputation, and withal of high courage and resolution, and he sent a challenge to Mr. Van Vechten, putting it into the hands of my grandfather to be delivered to Mr. Van Vechten, as his second. He was referred to Mr. Emott as Mr. Van Vechten’s second. Before making arrangements for the deadly meeting, the two friends set to work to see whether they could not bring the antagonists to terms and settle the difficulty. Accordingly my grandfather wrote to his principal the following letter, which was most creditable to himself and to all engaged in it, and one of the most honorable records which remain of him :

“ DEAR SIR :

“ Mr. Emott and myself wish to interpose and settle in a friendly manner your difference with Mr. V. Vechten, if it can be done consistently. I hope, Sir, altho’ this attempt is made at a late hour, we shall not be the less successful in

the end. Should this favorable interposition meet your approbation, pray drop me a line, and the time, place and measures will be fixed by Mr. Emott and myself, unless intervening circumstances make it necessary to have them altered.

“I am, Sir,

“With sentiments of esteem,

“Your friend and Hble Servt,

“K. K. VAN RENSSELAER.

“August 24. 1799.”

This drew forth the following characteristic reply:

“SCOTIA, Augt. 26th, 1799.

“DEAR SIR:

“Your letter of yesterday’s date I have now before me. Your wishes to interpose with Mr. Van Veghten and myself respecting our dispute I thank you and Mr. Emot for. I cannot under present circumstances see how friends can well *interpose* with me, since Mr. Van Veghten has thought proper to deny his assertions made to me, before the bar of the public; besides I have been credibly informed he has charged me in public company with having reported lies about him. I conceive I am in duty bound to support the truth and my own character and reputation. I have accordingly sent my affidavit to Messrs. Websters respecting the business. I still stand charged before the public of having declared an untruth—how or in what manner can friends settle this? Will Mr. Van Veghten disavow what he has said? Your friendly interference is very natural, and I wish had been more timely before the business was circumstanced as it now is. I confess I can not see how it can now be compromised.

“I however wish you to stop the publication I sent to the Messrs. Websters, that Mr. Van Veghten and his friends may see that I am disposed to a settlement of this unpleasant business; if a mode can be suggested and devised by them of accomplishing it on just, fair and reasonable principles, I will meet it with readiness. But the business has been carried now, I think, too far for accommodation. Any propositions they wish to attempt ought to be made without loss of time, as this business has been already too long protracted.

“I am, Sir,

“Your friend and hmble Servt,

“J. SANDERS.”

This reply did not promise much success to their peacemaking efforts. But they were not discouraged, and persevered until they succeeded in reconciling the antagonists, and winning all the glory from the strife in becoming "peacemakers."

## CHAPTER SEVENTH.

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### CONGRESSIONAL CAREER.

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My grandfather was elected a Representative in the seventh Congress in his thirty-seventh year. It was the first one that met in Washington, and was the precursor of many critical events in the history of the nation. Jefferson had just been elected President by the preceding House of Representatives after a heated and doubtful contest with Colonel Aaron Burr, during which civil war had been talked of unless a choice was made. The whole policy of the government was on the eve of a revolution from the system inaugurated by Washington and advocated by the Federalists, of whom, as mentioned previously, my grandfather was one, and of whom General Schuyler was the acknowledged leader in New York. Harrison Gray Otis, his college correspondent, had been a member of the two preceding Congresses. He was re-elected for four successive terms thereafter, and served through the two terms of Jefferson and half of the first of Madison. Both houses were filled at that time with distinguished men from all parts of the nation, among whom were Rufus King, Gouverneur Morris, Philip V. Cortlandt, John Cotton Smith, James A. Bayard, John Randolph, James Madison,

Rutledge, Huger and Sumter, from South Carolina. Albert Gallatin, of a name famous in Geneva, Switzerland, began his distinguished career as Secretary of the Treasury, and Gideon Granger was made Postmaster-General. Henry Clay entered Congress just as my grandfather was about to leave it.

The Constitution of the United States leaves to the Senators and Representatives to "ascertain by law" the amount to be paid them for their services; and the rate established by the fathers—\$3 a day and twenty cents a mile—was moderate enough for those days. It cost my grandfather to get to Washington from Albany to his first session \$58.06, and his expenses for three sessions averaged \$361.33, while he received on an average only \$324, and that not promptly paid. Board was \$10 a week, a very high rate for that time, but ridiculously small for the habits of present Congressmen. Sometimes the members formed messes, and he seems to have been the treasurer of one composed of Generals Dayton and Morris, Colonel Sims and Messrs. Bayard, Walker, Thomas Morris, Campbell, Hill and Wood. The visiting card of the day varied from a model of simplicity to a piece of card-board impressed with elaborate designs of a nondescript character. "A: Burr," then Vice-President, wrote his name in his distinct, bold hand on one of the former, while that of "Mr. Madison" is inscribed in an elaborate border of filagree work adorned with flowers, a lute and guitars: that of "Le Comte de Pahlen, Envoyé Ext: et Ministre Pleni: de S. M: l'Empereur de toutes les Russies," was engraved in the modern style. President Jefferson's invitations to dinner were printed



on coarse paper, and informed the recipient that "Thos. Jefferson requests the favour of Mr. Van R. to dine with him on——day next at 2 o'clock, or as soon thereafter as the adjournment of the House will permit;" the carrying out of which humble waiting on the pleasure and convenience of the House of Representatives must have elicited the patience as well as the skill of the "Aunty" who ruled in the Presidential kitchen. President Madison improved on the dinner hour, as follows: "J. Madison requests the favor of Mr. Van R. to dine with him on Tuesday next at four o'clock." Another invitation recalls one of General Washington's closest friends, whom he persuaded to become a resident of Washington in its infancy, and who built the spacious mansion on the corner of New York avenue and Eighteenth street, which is one of the surviving relics of the primitive city, not having been destroyed by the British in 1814—Colonel Tayloe: "Mr. Tayloe requests the favor of Mr. Van Rensselaer to dine with him on Saturday next at 4 o'clock. The favour of an answer is requested. Wensday 9th febry." And the Plenipotentiary of the Czar of Russia sends an invitation: "Count Pahlen requests the honour of Mr. Van Rensselaer's company at dinner on Monday February 18th at half-past four o'clock. The favour of an answer is requested." The ambassador of Napoleon was not successful in getting the name of the Representative, as appears by the following: "General Turreau requests the favour of Mr. Warrasselaer's company to dine on Wednesday next at four o'clock. Thursday, December 20th, 1810. An answer is requested."

My grandfather's commencement of his Congressional career was marked by a change from the custom of Washington in reading an address to the Congress in person, to that of the President's addressing a message, which has ever since been pursued. He was placed on the most important committee on Ways and Means. The pernicious policy of diminishing the number of years required for the naturalization of foreigners from fourteen to five was recommended by Jefferson and adopted by Congress; the perilous fruits of which we are reaping in the domination of foreign ideas and methods which threaten the very existence of the freedom which it cost our fathers so much blood and treasure to gain for us. Mr. Jefferson was opposed to the "spoils" system in appointing to public offices, nor can he justly be accused of inconsistency in his course; but his removals of Federalists from offices to which they had been appointed undoubtedly was the little end of the wedge which has played such havoc in our public service. The ten years of my grandfather's service in Congress were signalized by some of the most important crises in our national history, and he was called on to take part in meeting and shaping them. The purchase of Louisiana from France, beginning with a modest offer for the acquisition of New Orleans, and ending with the transfer of the vast territory west of the Mississippi, was the chief act of the Jefferson administration, which made the peaceable dissolution of the Union thenceforth impossible. On the recommendation of the President a sword and medals were voted to naval officers who had captured a Tripoli corsair after a fight, and thus made our flag respected by those

pirates. The famous expedition of Lewis and Clarke, which had been planned by the President, and was one of his best and wisest plans for the country, was sent out in 1804, and laid the foundation for the future explorations and the settlement of the great west. The famous Cumberland road, which became a subject for so much contention on the part of the "strict constructionists" of the Constitution, was begun in 1806, to open the route from the seaboard to the Ohio. The conspiracy and expedition of Colonel Burr for the invasion of Mexico occupied the minds of all in 1806, and called forth the most vigorous measures of the administration for its suppression; although he managed to escape conviction on his trial in Richmond from want of evidence, as might have been expected from so able a lawyer and shrewd a scoundrel as he was. The war in Europe between Napoleon and Great Britain, during which arbitrary decrees and orders were issued by both combatants, seriously crippling our commerce and ruining our merchants, caused the government to retaliate by an embargo and non-intercourse, by which we injured ourselves as much as we did them. The dissatisfaction in New England on account of the stagnation in trade, was intense, and at one time threatened a secession. The provision of the Constitution for the abolition of the slave trade in twenty years was carried into effect by Congress in 1808. The refusal of Congress in 1811 to renew the charter of the Bank of the United States, which was earnestly desired by the mercantile community, was the cause of wide-spread distress, as was made clear from the correspondence of the day. Fulton's great achievement in propelling boats by steam

in 1807 marked a new era in the progress of the nation and of mankind. Inventors and schemers were busy as they are now, and Louis Dupré and Thomas Bruff, respectively, petitioned for a grant to enable them to perfect their plans for "perpetual motion;" but they were allowed to withdraw their petitions. European complications were continually threatening us, and the nation was slowly but surely drifting into a war with Great Britain, chiefly on account of her practice of stopping and searching our ships for alleged British sailors. January 17, 1806, he wrote to my father, then at college in Montreal:

"Our country is truly in a delicate situation, and our trade and commerce makes us an object for all nations to court, and the least partiality to one more than the other renders us an object of envy and resentment; hence, a disposition for the European powers whom we do not favor to entangle us in a war, which I trust we shall avoid."

The contest between Jefferson and Burr for the presidency, both having received an equal number of electoral votes for President, had revealed a defect in the Constitution, to correct which Congress adopted the present provision, three-fourths of the States concurring. The Legislature of New York had previously proposed the amendment in resolutions which were sent to the Senators and Representatives at Washington with the following letter:

"ALBANY, 2d Feb. 1802.

"SIR:

"In behalf and by request of the Legislature of this State, we do ourselves the honor of transmitting to you the above Resolutions, which passed both Houses without a dissenting

voice ; and we earnestly request that you will use your best exertions in carrying the same into effect.

“ We have the honor to be,

“ With the highest consideration,

“ Your most obedient Servants,

“ JER. V. RENSSELAER, President of Senate.

“ Attested “ THOMAS STORM, Speaker of Assembly.

“ ABM B. BANCKER, Clk

“ of the Senate.

“ JAS. VAN INGEN, Clk

“ of the Assembly.”

The change which the Telegraph has wrought is illustrated by the following :

“ To the Honble KILLYAEN K. V. RENSSELAER, ESQR,

“ In Congress,

“ Washington.”

“ ALBANY, February 1, 1802.

“ DEAR SIR:

“ Pardon the liberty I take of Inclosing you a letter for Mr. Rensselaer. If he should have left Washington to return to this place, be pleased to send the letter to him under cover of one of yours.

“ The newspapers will advise you of the havoc made by the late Council of Appointment.

“ Mr. Hoffman has resigned the office of Attorney General. and Mr. Spencer will probably be appointed thereto to-day.

“ I am,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your most Obedient Servant,

“ PH. SCHUYLER.”

“ Honble KILLYAEN K. V. RENSSELAER, ESQR.

“ SIR:

“ My Father desires me to beg you will forward the enclosed letter to Mr. Van Rensselaer if he should have left Washington before it arrives. He hopes you will excuse the liberty he takes in giving you this trouble.

“ I have the pleasure of assuring you, Sir, that all your family here are in health. Yours, &c., &c.,

“ CATHARINE VR. SCHUYLER.

“ ALBANY, 22d Jany.”



This was the infant rescued by her brave sister from the tomahawk of the savage at the Schuyler Mansion.

The following reminiscence, communicated by my Grandfather in a letter to Jared Sparks, is both interesting and suggestive :

“Gouverneur Morris in the year 1801 was a Senator from the State of New York in the Senate of the United States. In the Fall of 1801 he founded a mess at Washington on Capitol Hill, composed of Six Senators and Six Representatives. I had the honor to be one of that *mess*.

“In the winter of 1802 Mr. Robt. Morris, the old financier from Philadelphia, came to Washington on a visit. We unanimously agreed to admit him to join our mess as a boarder. At this period the subject about removing the seat of Government, amongst other things, was a topic of conversation. It was at that time I first heard Mr. Robt. Morris say that Govnr. Morris wanted to fix the seat of the Federal Government at New Burgh and New-Windsor in the Constitution, when the Convention was framing the same to be submitted to the States. I asked Mr. R. Morris if a proposition or motion to that effect had been made in form by Mr. G. Morris? His answer was, No. The great object, Mr. R. Morris said, was to agree on a Constitution. The seat of Government was a secondary consideration:—independent of many weighty reasons against such a *motion*, he added: I deemed it improper for Govnr. Morris to make it. He was my compeer from Pennsylvania as a Delegate. It would have given great offence to the State, &c. By reasoned raillery I got him to abandon it. At that time I considered the idea chimerical and romantic; but I have changed my mind since, &c. That Govnr. Morris in support of his opinion urged as an argument the following reasons, to wit:—That New Burgh was the only place near the Atlantic in the Union, that had combined with it all the requisites for the Seat of Government:

“I. Perfect safety in time of war from an attack by an enemy.

“II. Free access to the Ocean every month in the year by our shipping—its contiguity, &c.



"III. Perfect security for Naval and Military arsenals, &c., added to a large cove or Basin for a Navy Yard to secure shipping in time of war, &c.

"IV. A large city near it with a spacious harbor and a thousand facilities to aid the Government in any exigency.

"V. Surrounded by States filled with free men, that would support and defend the Capital, &c.

"VI. A place that could be approached by water from all quarters as soon as Lake Erie was tapped and the Canal was made to the Hudson.

"I have thus, my good sir, in substance stated the above information as I received it from Mr. Robt. Morris; to which I beg leave to add that I have (on proper occasions) imparted the same to others since 1802."

General William North, of Duanesburgh, was a personal and political friend of my grandfather, and a frequent correspondent. He was clever, witty, a ready writer, and an uncompromising opponent of Jefferson and his party. He had been aide to Baron Steuben in the Revolution. His love of fun, as it is related, led him to illustrate the Baron's hot temper and ignorance of the English language by the following parable: — The Baron would get so angry at the awkwardness of the soldiers in their drill that he would call out to his aide at his side — "Swear at them for me!" He had recited this so often in the Baron's hearing that at length the Baron repeated it himself at a dinner party as an actual occurrence, when North claimed it as an invention of his own imagination! The following extracts afford a flavor of his voluminous correspondence, and of his views on men and things at the beginning of this century:

"Your great man\* wishes to overturn everything. He begins at the Christian Religion and ends with the ceremonies of a drawing room. He is a Philosopher, and there is nothing too Great nor too Small for your Philosophers."

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\* Jefferson.

"The devil is let loose, and when he will be chained again no one knows — and the worst of it is, he goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. May GOD have you in his holy keeping.

" Feb. 15—March 10, 1804.

"How it is with you I know not, but here an eternal, never-dying Winter reigns; the light of the sun is intercepted by the thick-falling snows, and the cold exhalations from the earth, frozen to its center, form a frigid atmosphere through which its genial warmth can never penetrate. In plain English, it has been, is, and I am afraid will be to the end of May, bitter cold. There is no hay in our country, and the snow is too deep to browse our cattle. This is our melancholy situation, while you, O Titurus, under the shadow of the Man Mountain, are either playing or hearing the swains around you play on the words Patriotism, Economy and Justice. Play on, as the late Empress of Russia said to the drummer of her Guards, who while she was looking out of the window, had come *behind* her, and was giving some *poing* strokes with his drumstick—play on, till you raise a sett of dancers who will foot the master of the ceremonies, and his obsequious band of Semivirs out of the orchestra into the *arena*, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

"I like to support religion or even the semblance of religion, and I wish to get money without labor—enclosed are \$10, with which please to buy me a ticket in the Roman Catholic Lottery.

"I am your friend,

"GULIELMUS DE MONT MARIE."

"Mont Marie," after which he whimsically signed himself, was the name of the General's place at Duanesburgh, Schenectady county.

Jonathan Mason, of Boston, was in Washington at this time (1804-5), and made this record in his diary: "Washington City is as it has been. It does not improve and is filled with dissensions."

The criminal prosecution of Harry Crosswell, afterwards the celebrated Rector of Trinity Church, New Haven, but then editor of "*The Balance*," of Hudson,

for an alleged libel on the President, was one of the "*causes célèbres*" of that epoch. The following gives an impression of the intense party feeling which it evoked:

"ALBANY, February 18th, 1804.

"A triumph of Federal talents was displayed on a late occasion which I cannot forbear relating to you. It was on the application of Harry Crosswell to the Supreme Court for a new trial on an indictment for libel against the President of the United States, the particulars of which you have undoubtedly heard. The case was argued on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday last, before a crowded house; four Judges on the bench; Spencer and Counsellor Kames for the prosecution, and Messrs. Van Ness, Harison and Hamilton for the defendant. Mr. Hamilton closed the argument with a speech of three hours and a half, and the most splendid strain of eloquence was there displayed that perhaps was (ever) witnessed—so acute, so profound—now demonstrating the inapplicability of the Common Law doctrine of *Ld. Mansfield* to this country, then dissecting the arguments of the opposite counsel, showing their fallacy with inconceivable strength and ingenuity; now dwelling on the nature of the libel, adverting to the charge against Mr. Jefferson of paying Callender for reviling Washington, Adams, &c.

"Here opened a field for a display of pathos—again touching on the nature of the effects of calumny to undermine by degrees the best reputation on earth, he took high ground, professed an abhorrence for all libellers, but strongly did he plead the necessity of establishing those principles which were contained in the Sedition Law—the necessity of investigating the characters of men in public stations, and of candidates for office, he investigated. It's impossible to give you an idea with what energy he demonstrated the necessity of strictly adhering to certain known and fixed principles in our government, of maintaining those principles in their purity as essential to the preservation of our liberties; of the actual danger which threatened our liberties by the spirit of factions innovating on our Constitution, especially in destroying the barriers which had been set up to guard the independence of the judiciary system.

“It is impossible for my feeble pen to attempt to give you even an outline of his argument ; suffice it to say that so impressive, so pathetic, so solemn was this brilliant display of eloquence as to draw tears from old and young in the assemblage of spectators. Farewell, and believe me with esteem Yours,

“JOHN VAN SCHAIK.”

It was not many months after (July 11th, 1804), that this brilliant career was cut short by the murderous hand of Burr, who admitted to my kinsman, Judge John Sanders, Jr., that he had intended to kill Gen. Hamilton in revenge for having prevented his being chosen President of the United States ; that he had felt no regrets for it, and was willing to repeat it ! A striking illustration of the means by which a man contemplating deliberate murder may shield himself under the so-called “Code of Honor.”

He spent his first New Year’s day at home in four years, in 1805, during the second session of the 8th Congress. It can well be imagined by those who knew his family how heartily he was welcomed by wife, children and kindred, and by all his friends. It was during this visit, when he was in a jocose mood and enjoying the happiness of home, that he wrote the following letter to one of his messmates in Washington, Mr. Dana, a bachelor. He possessed a vein of quiet humor running through his nature which he was fond of indulging when he wrote ; though I never remember hearing him laugh aloud, a smile being the utmost that he allowed himself. To explain the jocose allusion in it, which might seem to cast a doubt on his habitual abstemiousness, it must be remembered that it was written on New Year’s day, the great festival of the Dutch, rivaling the feast of

the patron Saint, St. Nicholas. On New Year's day every good citizen was expected to provide New Year's cakes, oilekoeks and crulletjes, with plenty of cordials upon the sideboard for his neighbors, who, on their part, were expected to call with greetings for "A Happy New Year," and partake liberally of the good cheer provided for them. The "Dominie" was always specially remembered with a large round "koekie" stamped with a scene from the Bible, as indeed all New Year's cakes were. It was a breach of courtesy and friendly neighborhood to pass over anyone in these calls, or to treat the refreshments with neglect, which could not easily be atoned for. On these occasions the sober burghers warmed into goodfellowship and kindly feeling, and had their good time for the year. This will explain the allusion to the "drams" in the letter:

"ALBANY, Jan. 1st, '05.

"DR. SIR:

"I have been since my return to Albany almost in a state of *Frozation*, (as Mr. Stedman would say were he applied to for an appropriate phrase to describe the feelings of a person in our cold latitude just now.) But I am thawed out:—whether it is occasioned by a change of the weather, or from the number of *drams* I have taken this morning, I cannot tell: but certain I am that there is no inclemency of season that ever prevents an Albanian from calling on his friends to greet them on the return of the New Year. We are therefore all a tip-toe just now; and you may justly conclude that I am in good spirits, and in a fair way of being thawed out, if I am not so already.

"Present, my dear sir, the compliments of the season to the Pickering Mess—Mr. and Mrs. Coyle;—and as for yourself, may the winged moments steal gently past you and whisper peace in their silent passage; may conscience always smile upon you like a well-pleased angel; may your friends be firm and free from dissimulation; may your enemies search in vain for matters of reproach and be confounded;



may hypocrites drop their masks before you and stand abashed ; may health with cheerful spirits still feed the lamp of life ; and to crown the sum of human happiness, may you find the partner whose soul is framed on the model of your own, whose benevolent mind beams from her countenance like the morning sun from the rosy chambers of the East ; may your children like olive branches (12 sons and 9 daughters) surround your table, on which let plenty be poured from the lap of fortune in unlimited stores ! And when you have thus glided along with the smooth current of time, and find yourself at length on the threshold of Eternity, may you with joy quit a world of vanity, and grasp that unending felicity which is there reserved for the good ! ”

Whether these cordial and overflowing New Year’s aspirations for his bachelor friend at Washington were granted in their completeness is not recorded ; but we may well hope and believe that they were given in such a measure as was good for human frailty to enjoy.

The following was from one of his political opponents, who nevertheless had always been on the most friendly terms with him from their early days. The writer will be recognized as one of the ablest and most distinguished men whom this State has produced :

“ALBANY, Dec. 25, 1805,

“DEAR SIR :

“Your obliging letter of the 16th announcing the transmission of the *Intelligencer*, demands my grateful acknowledgments for your polite attention, as well as your favor of the Message. This paper, which you correctly term, in the American sense of the word, Ministerial, is valuable during the session of Congress, as a repository of the debates in the two branches, and in lucubrations speaking sometimes the sense of the Cabinet.

“The European news lately furnished us present great themes for consideration and conjecture. How the affairs of that illfated portion of the globe will eventuate, the God



of battles can only foresee. But this we may safely affirm, that we live in an age peculiarly pregnant with great events.

"It is perhaps not injurious to us, as a people, that the ambition and folly of Kings and Emperors give employment to all their energies across the Atlantic. \* \* \*

"With respect and esteem,

"Your Obdt. Servt.,

"A. SPENCER.

"Honble. K. K. VAN RENSSELAER."

The following from his life-long friend and the friend of his brother Philip, Colonel Richard Varick; and from his brother-in-law John Sanders, give a vivid idea of the financial distress of the country at the beginning of 1811. The refusal of Congress to recharter the United States Bank, which had been incorporated under Washington, was popularly considered to be the cause of it.

"NEW YORK, 8th January, 1811.

"I now steal a few Minutes, my dear Friend, to thank You for your many Addresses and the valuable Envelopes. As you Gentlemen of Congress are tongue-tied so often you dare not tell your Friends that you are in Health, but leave it to be inferred from your being able to address Packets to your Friends. If this is the Honor my friends so eagerly seek after, they are most heartily welcome thereto. I do not envy them, nor will I presume to interfere to supplant any of them in the exalted Station of Senator or Representative of the United States."

"23rd Jany., 1811.

"Confidence, my dear friend, is pretty nearly gone between the most intimate Friends, for no man knows here whether from one week to another he can meet his own Engagements, and a few more days' Delay in the Business of re-chartering the National Bank will prostrate the Credit of many of our best and able Merchants. \* \* \* The present Session of Congress will probably decide the fate of our future Commercial Credit for Years to come, and punctuality in payments to *Government* as well as to Individuals will cease to be realized unless the evil is soon

remedied. Are Eppes and his adherents mad, or are they sworn to sacrifice the Interests of the United States at the Shrine of French Ambition and Omnipotence? Are we to make no struggle for our once Independent Country? God bless and help us, for we will not try to help ourselves.

“Yours very affectly,

“RICH. VARICK.”

“NEW YORK, 28th Jany., 1811. 12 o’clk.

“I thank you, my dear Rensselaer, for your two letters of the 28th, as also that of the 24th, giving me information of the final result of your Deliberations on the Bank Question. The Conduct of your House puts our Country in a more critical Situation than the Opposers of the Bank imagine. The total Destruction of all paper Credit may and probably will follow on their madness and folly, if persisted in.

“My Brother’s Failure involves me ultimately in about \$7,000, part of which will be eventually secure; but I must, and thank GOD, yet can advance Credit for the *Whole Money* by the first of May: But that entirely cripples me as to helping other Friends for more than 3 months. I have borrowed for your Sister Maria and her Son Philip P. Van Rensselaer, on their Bond to me, and paid the monies to two firms here on Phil’s order, \$1,000. I could not refuse Maria’s Solicitations on the subject, and have therefore increased my debts by that small sum. \* \* \*

“GOD bless you. My respects to my friends Tallmadge, Gardinier, &c. Adieu, and my best wishes attend you and your fellows.

“RICHARD VARICK.

“KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR.”

“SCOTIA, 9th Jany., 1811.

“I long to hear from you and learn what measures are likely to be adopted by Congress. Those you mention in your last I fear are big with distress. We experience here an almost total stop to all circulation of money. No banks discount, and it is expected, will not for a long time. Failures have begun and fear will multiply greatly. My representation is from experience: Though I have many able people who owe me some, and though my Sons were out for 8 days, I could not get together \$200 to pay the call and discount at bank; and my notes must be renewed without

the call or be protested. I assure you no exertion in my power was left unessayed ; thus you may form some idea of the times with us. Though there is little or no crops the people find difficulty to vend anything, and money can no longer be got at. \* \* \*

"My daughter Catharine is very ill at New York. Mr. Beekman writes me once a week ; in his last her situation was more promising. Accept my best wishes for your health and happiness.

"Your friend as usual,

"JOHN SANDERS."

"February 1st, 1811.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Your favour of the 18th ultimo, covering the report and statements of the Secretary of the Treasury, is come to hand. The measures of Administration I fear will reduce us to poverty and distress. This is a consequence inevitable, and likely to be persevered in till the good and upright part of society be awakened from the lethargy which has given the predominant party the rule, and put in men who have the welfare of their country only in view. Such a change must soon take place, or we will be undone. \* \* \*

"My daughter Mrs. Beekman by the last letters appears a little more promising. All desire their affectionate compliments to you, which please accept also from your friend and brother in-law,

"JOHN SANDERS."

My grandfather's public life terminated with this Congress. He had spent the greater part of ten winters and springs at Washington, and the state of his family and his private affairs required his return to private life. The happiness which this brought to his family will be learned from what is to follow. The respect and regard of his associates which he carried away with him from the theatre of his public service will be inferred from the following characteristic and admirable letter from his Congressional messmate, the Hon. James A. Bayard.

“WILMINGTON, 25 April, 1813.

“DEAR SIR :

“I had the pleasure to receive yesterday your letter of the 17th inst. It is quite true, as the public prints have stated, that the President has offered me the appointment of one of the Commissioners proposed to be sent to the Court of Russia.

“The object of the Mission being to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain under the mediation of the Emperor of Russia, I have considered it my duty not to refuse any aid in my power to contribute towards its attainment. I can assure you that the selection for the service which the Government have thought proper to make is entirely *ex parte*, and that they have not asked for any private understanding upon any point whatsoever. They have taken me as that man whom they and the people at large have known in public life for years past. If any sinister views be entertained they are unknown to me; but if that were the case, it is wonderful that they should select a political adversary to trust with the secret.

“I can well imagine without the exercise of either confidence or charity, that peace may be sincerely desired by the Administration. They who are most jealous cannot suppose it to be their wish to ruin themselves as well as the country; but such must be the case if the war be protracted, when there are means of terminating it on any fair grounds.

“I am employed to assist in settling the differences between Great Britain and the United States. These differences we all wish to see settled, and how could I consistently refuse my aid in accomplishing so desirable an end?

“If the negotiation should fail (the worst event which can happen), the nation can sustain no injury from my having been a member of the Mission. I can only be called upon to attest the true grounds upon which the negotiation may have terminated, and it certainly will be important for the Country to know the truth upon the subject.

“Sensible that nothing has or can enter into my views upon the occasion inconsistent with the honor, interest and welfare of the country, I cannot feel apprehensive of losing, while I am confident I shall never deserve to forfeit, the confidence of my political friends.

“Very Sincerely yours,

“J. A. BAYARD.”

## CHAPTER EIGHTH.

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### MARGARETTA SANDERS — HER DOMESTIC LIFE — HER LETTERS.

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My estimable grandmother, Margaretta Sanders, was called home April 21, 1830. She had been preparing for it through many years of ill-health, which had been patiently borne, and her end was like her life, full of humble and devout trust in her God and Savior. She was descended on her father's side from Robert Sanders, famous in the annals of Albany and of the Province of New York for his knowledge of the Indian languages, and his influence over the Mohawks, which made his services indispensable in difficult negotiations with them. On her mother's side she traced her lineage from Sander Lenderse Glen, whose name is found in the records of the "Colonie" in the year 1639, and who, in company with Benoni Van Corlaer and others, in 1661, secured the land at Schenectady where his descendants still reside. The Labadist missionaries who visited Albany in 1680 have left a pleasant account of their reception and treatment by Robert Sanders, which has been copied by Mr. Weise in his "History of Albany." John Sanders, her father, married Deborah, daughter of Colonel Jacob Glen; in whom Colonel, afterwards Sir William Johnson, trusted largely in his difficult and dangerous task of controlling the Indians along



the Mohawk during that critical period; and who, in his mansion at Scotia, held one of the extreme outposts of the English settlements towards Canada, then possessed by the French. My grandmother was born, their fourth daughter, June 20, 1764, and she was married January 27, 1791. Her childhood and girlhood had been passed amid the stormy and perillous scenes of the Revolutionary war, on a dangerous frontier continually exposed to the murderous forays of the Indians and of the more cruel Tories, and the experience of those seven trying years could hardly have failed to make their impress on her character. As I recall her, she was grave and serious without being austere or sanctimonious, religious without any cant, full of wise maxims, prudent and careful in affairs, looking well to her household, with an excellent head for business, and a keen sense of justice, difficult to be imposed upon and incapable of doing wrong to any one. She was an affectionate and devoted wife and mother, and a most judicious, loving and tender grandmother. It was her delight to see her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews around her, and "Aunt Peggy" was a universal favorite with them. She had been reared in the habits of frontier hospitality, for which Scotia was always famous, and she fully shared her husband's hospitable inclinations, which always preferred the substantial to the showy, and shunned a display beyond their means. She brought with her a handsome estate inherited from her father and mother, of which two "morgens" (a little less than four acres) still remain in the possession of her descendants. She shared the dominion of the first floor of the old mansion with my grand-



father; he having the front room for his "office," and she the rear room for her living-room; between them was the bedroom with the "kas" on which the well-remembered basket of spitzenbergs used to stand; the present butler's pantry was used as the dining-room when the family was small. My mother was her favorite, as she deserved to be; in fact they were very much alike in many points of character — high principle, perfect truthfulness, sincere and unaffected piety, entire reliability and unselfishness, deep and constant affections, a supreme devotion and unstinted love for her family and kindred, and great trials. Fortunately many of my grandmother's letters, written to my grandfather when he was in Congress, have been preserved. They afford such a pleasing transcript of a true, sincere, sensible woman, a faithful, loving and submissive wife, a tender, affectionate and thoughtful mother, a patient and uncomplaining sufferer, and a humble and devout Christian. that my account would be incomplete without ample extracts from them. If they are lacking in the graces of composition, or defective in any of the requisites of a good letter, about which my grandfather was so punctilious, it must be ascribed to the time and place in which she passed her girlhood, and the privations of the war, among which the difficulty of educating girls was not the least, when even the school of the Moravians was appropriated for a hospital by the Americans; and to the fact that they were written in ill-health and amid the distraction caused by the romping of children. They do not, however, in the least mar the impression of her character conveyed by her thoughts and words. It is a cause for us, her descend-

ants, to be thankful that they survive to supply, however imperfectly, that living voice which has been so long hushed in death, and which always enforced the lessons of love, truth and goodness which she practiced, and that by means of them she "being dead yet speaketh."

"Nov. 29, 1801. I should undoubtedly written you before, but as John remains the same as you left him I was in hopes to have given you better tidings. Barent has been very ill with an inflammation in his throat and vomiting; he was seized the day you left this. Three days I despaired of his recovery, but by great attention I flatter myself he is out of danger. Your two other sons are in health. You may suppose that I am weak and worn down. P. S. John, William and Richard send their love and a Kiss to you and Barney crys 'Dada.'"

"Decbr. 7, 1801. It is with pleasure that I can inform you that our son John is mending; he dined with us these two days. He has had the same complaint he had three years ago, when he was reduced so low. His cough and hives still remain on him tho not so violent; his fever has left him; I flatter myself with proper care he will do well. Barney is recovered, and looks to every Gentleman that calls in for his Dada, but after staring for a while he discovers his mistake, and then hides his face. William's well and sends his love to you. Richard is as great a buck as ever, and sends a kiss to you. Master John requests that if you arrive at Washington you will write him a letter, as he is too weak to write to you. He hopes when you return he will be in Cæsar, for he intends to study night and day when he gets well; he sends Ten Kisses to you. But, poor fellow, I fear he will be confined some time yet. I assure you I have had a trying time of it since you left me; my spirits have been much depressed. But the prospect is brightening; my babes are recovering, and I hope next Spring to receive you home contented and happy, which is the sincere wish of her who is always most happy when with you."

"Decr. 17, 1801. Our son John is almost well, tho his lungs are weak, and he is sometimes hoarse, which prevents my sending him to school. The rest of the Children are

in health ; the family well, except myself. I have a violent cough that attacks me day and night, tho the Doctor flatters me it is an asthmatic cough. I am weak and most of my time confined to my bed. My spirits are good and I hope for the best. Our dear William is a very good boy, and improves his time well since you left him. He says his lesson twice a day, spells well, and reads three verses of "No man" perfect. The children send their love, and each a dozen kisses."

"Jany. 12, 1802. I am happy once more to resume my pen to write after four weeks tedious confinement. My complaint has been really dangerous — more so than I was actually sensible of. The violence of my fever is in a great measure removed, and my strength is increased, so that I can walk out of the bedroom into the front room ; but my cough and weakness and pain in my side and breast still hang on me. Pray, make yourself easy, for I have refused letting you know my situation until I could write myself. Our dear little flock is in health. William is at Schenectady since Christmas. O how I long to see him ! If he comes down (with your permission) I shall keep him home ; he is accustomed to be indulged a great deal home. Caty Sanders stays with me for company and sends her respects. My dear little boys all join with me in giving you the Compliments of the season, and each sends you a kiss. O how happy your sons are when I receive a letter from you ! They jump about me for a quarter of an hour, each equally anxious to hear how you are."

"Jany. 27, 1802. Our dear babes are in health. Barney's a fine promising boy, but I cannot flatter his papa he looks much like him. Richard is a handsome, active little fellow, and so much afraid that his mama will take cold again that he carries almost all the wood I burn in both Rooms. You may suppose from John's illness and absence from school he is not improved as much as I could wish. He has got through Corderii ; I have purchased him another book yesterday called Mare's Introduction. He reads well ; altho I have not been able to bestow any attention on him. He is under much better control than when you were home, and does not attempt to stir out unless by my permission.

"This day brings to my mind many past scenes and reflections. It is to-day eleven years that we were connected, and the first time we were ever separated on that day. I

wrote the 12th, which was Barent's birthday (*one* year old). I should certainly not have delayed writing had my health permitted me before, for nothing affords me more satisfaction and pleasure than to converse with you and receive a line from you. I even sometimes fear that the length of my letter and the petty stuff it contains will exhaust your patience amongst so many scenes of more importance.

"Our dear William is at Schenectady; since the 25th of December I have not seen him. Ben returned from there this evening, with the old cow, and assures me he is well and hearty, and does not wish to come home only to see his mama and return. The dear boys joyn in sending their love and respects to you. The family is well. Caty Sanders sends her love."

"Feb. 20, 1802. Our dear little boys are in health. William is still here; I cannot get him to go to Eliza (Mrs. Anderson) again; he even crys if I attempt to put up his clothes. I will try to get him off to-morrow with Mr. Sanders; if not, I will put him to school here again. He says if I send him to Schenectady he will get sick; he has had something of asthma but is almost well. My strength and appetite is much better than it has been, but my cough and pain in my breast is much the same and keeps me confined to my two rooms; front, back, are the only exercise I can as yet take. I flatter myself time every day makes one nearer for your return home; but then if I reflect two long months' absence will still be tedious to pass by. If you can only be home before I have to move in May I shall be happy; for I do not know how to accomplish it if you should not be home. I have some uneasiness on me that you're not in health; if so pray keep it not from me. If the climate does not agree with you, I beg you will not sacrifice your health to it.

"John is of late not so attentive to reading and study as I would wish him. Pray write him on the subject, as I suppose it will have a good effect on him if he thinks I have informed you of it. It's mostly owing to Mrs. Sanders being here, and Company in and out all the evening; she has spent a fortnight here. Caty is gone home. The servants behave as well as I can expect considering you are from home; altho' I found it difficult when you first left to do anything with Bet or Sam; but finding I would not give way to them I have them under good regulations at

present. My dear babes send each their love and each a kiss. Billy has stood at my elbow all the time I have been writing, and Barney pulling at my gown. It is bed time, and I must conclude with wishing you health and a speedy and safe return to your affectionate and sincere Margaretta."

"Feby. 22, 1802. William is gone up to Schenectady yesterday with Mr. Sanders. I had to promise him he should certainly come home in a fortnight again. I do not find he is improved at all; he has lost most part of his spelling; and believe me, it is a difficult task to force him away with tears on his cheeks. Pray let me know your wish under these circumstances, as he is not in good health. The boys send their love."

"March 1st, 1802. Barent is a sweet little fellow and so lively and mischievous he keeps me and Caty busy all day; he is in every part of the house in a moment; he stands alone and walks two steps. Richard is a true sailor; indeed there is no possibility to keep him quiet so long as to learn his lesson. I have sent him to Mrs. Wilson's school; he came back in the evening with a message that he kept the whole school a laughing; she could not manage him yet; I must keep him home one year longer. I have, however, persevered and teach him myself his *a b c* perfectly; he now learns his *ab*. I still continue to remain so weak I cannot yet leave my room; my lungs are so weak I cannot bear the least cold air, or my cough increases. Ritty says I must tell Papa he learns his lesson and is a good boy. Papa must bring sugar plums, everything that is good. He must come home quick, or he won't love Papa. John confesses he has neglected some part of his time; he will endeavour to make up for it, and will write to you and inclose a copy of a large and small hand, to convince you he strives to improve himself. They are almost out of patience--your absence appears to be so long to them. They cannot be more so, I am sure, than your sincere and unalterable Margaretta."

"March 15th, 1802. In overlooking a letter this morning of Mr. Sanders' which lay on the table I discovered that he mentioned to you that if you wished to be elected for Representative to Congress again he would mention it to your friends, and wished to know your sentiments on the Subject. This gave rise to the following melancholy reflections.



“Had I my health I certainly would be the first to wish you to attain to whatever your wishes might lead you in public life. But under present circumstances, finding myself inadequate to the task to take charge of the family in your absence, I should not wish you to engage yourself again.

“It hath pleased the all-wise Disposer of events to deprive me of health; you ought, therefore, to submit to it with resignation. It will undoubtedly (if my health does not assume more promising prospects), end ere long; nature must give way and sink under it. Should not my dear little babes then be left without a parent to protect them (for six or seven months in the year for three years successively) from snares and intrigues of the world, particularly John, who is of that age he requires the strictest attention to form his morals, and in a few years more, with proper instruction, he may be a pattern to the other boys.

“Should I even acquire health (which hope I have long before this given up) I could not think to follow you to Washington (unless it was a trial to regain health) my duty to small infants would require my remaining with them. I well know I could not make myself happy or contented without them.

“I do not wish you to imagine I wish to lay down rules to govern yourself by. These are bitter reflections that give me the greatest uneasiness, and it may possibly be in your power to relieve me of them.

“This leaves our dear little boys and family well. Their patience is almost exhausted. John sat down on Sunday and asked me very seriously whether I did not think it was his Papa's wish to be from home; the tears rolled down his Cheeks. Richard don't speak much more of you. Barney is a very promising child, but I suppose you are almost a stranger to him; he cries after Mr. Sanders wherever he sees him. Our two sons John and William arrived home this day, and play and are so noisy I hardly know what I write. I must conclude with wishing a speedy and safe return to your almost impatient Margaretta.”

“March 24th, 1802. Caty says if you come home by the first of May she will endeavour to save one bushel of apples of the best for you. O how often do I wish you only one apple when I see the children eating them so eagerly, for I well know they do not take their fondness for apples from



their mama. I have got a small and large copper-plate for John to write after. He now and then writes Latin at school, and that spoils his hand; he then writes too quickly. He has been three times thro' the Rudiments of Grammar and is half thro' Ross's Grammar. Barney is cutting his Eye teeth and not very well. If the small-pox should spread would you wish Barney to be inoculated? I am afraid I shall not be able to keep him in doors, he is so lively. Please let me know your Determination as soon as this reaches you. or the weather grows too warm. William is still at Schenectady. I promised him when he went up he should come down again in a fortnight; it is four weeks since he went. If he comes home I shall not force him away again. I do not think him much improved since he left home. O how much I am in want of a good and careful Gallant to carry me out? I imagine if I could ride out I would regain strength. My dear little boys have not had their feet into a sleigh this winter, only once with Mr. Sanders. "I am informed your political friends have your consent to your re-election for Member of Congress. I do not give any credit to it, as I am almost certain you would have mentioned it to me in one of your letters. My dear babes send you each a kiss."

"April 5th, 1802. I have been confined to my room for four months; undoubtedly a healthy person would be debilitated if so long confined, much more one who has not had her health for so long a time.

"Your return I *anticipate hourly* since I received your letter yesterday of the 26th March. The days and weeks will not *pass* so swiftly as I will imagine they *ought* to pass to bring you to *me* and your dear *boys*. Our son John has been on a visit to Schenectady with his uncle; has brought William down with him. I shall not let him go up again as I expect you home so *soon*, and I suppose you will be *happy* to find us *together*. John and William anticipate the pleasure of spending their birthday together the 10th of April.

"Our dear William sends his love to you and says you must come home soon. Richard does not forget you; Papa's name is mentioned quite as *often* as if you were home. I conclude with wishing you a speedy and safe return to your wife and family, and remain your affectionate and unalterable Margareta."

"Decr. 25th, 1802. Our dear little flock is in health, except Barnard, who has met with an accident and fell in the fire. Nothing is burnt but his hand ; it was very bad, but I think it is mending. I now write with him on my lap, and his finger daubing the paper with ink. Since the accident with his hand the dear little creature talks everything ; the pain forced him to speak. The first three or four days you left us he looked for you in every corner of the house, particularly in the bed, where he last saw you. He called me 'papa' for several days. The sweet Boy sits and kisses me continually, which (K) I send you.

"I cannot give you as good an account of myself as I could wish ; fatigue and the cold weather has in a great measure impaired my health. Our son John is not so attentive to his Brothers and his studies as I would wish ; you would oblige me in giving him a hint."

"Jany. 3d, 1803. Our dear boys are in health and spirits. May this be the last winter that their Father may be absent from them, for I find it every day more difficult to govern them without you. Our dear little Barnard's hand is mending fast ; it is almost well. He now reconciles himself to your absence. He calls Barent Sanders 'papa,' and watches him every moment if he expects he will go out. The old terror of your leaving him he has not yet forgot. I enclose here a little paper which he has been scribbling whilst I have been writing to you. It appears he knows to whom the letters are going, for he understands every word you speak."

"Jany. 23, 1803. Our dear little Barnard was burnt much worse than I wished to let you know ; Caty and myself were up with him day and night for 10 or 12 days, and I assure you I was afraid the hand was so contracted by the fire that he would never have had any use of it again, altho it is now quite well, \* \* \* Our dear little flock were never more healthy than they have been this winter, or more lively. Our son John is more attentive to his Brothers and the family since you wrote him his letter. Dear Barnard has left off calling Barney Sanders 'Papa ;' he calls him by his own name, and whenever I receive a letter from you he crys for it, and reads and handles it till it is almost destroyed, as if he knew it came from his papa."

"Jany. 30th, 1803. Our dear sons Richard and William were exceedingly happy to receive a letter from their papa ;

they made John read them so often that he was almost out of patience with them. Our dear little flock were never in better health and spirits. I allow them to play one hour every night before John and William go to reading and the rest to bed. I often sincerely wish you might have a peep at them for a few minutes; how you would be delighted to see dear little Bernard romp and play amongst them! They have not a wish to go on the street to play; their amusements they take on the back stoop and in the bedroom.

"My health is so delicate I much doubt whether I will be able to accompany you to Washington next Fall. The distance is so far I do not imagine I could undergo the fatigue; and by *water* I believe the *passage dangerous*; and to live another winter separated from you I cannot bear the idea of; but I trust He that ruleth all things will, I doubt not, provide for *that*.

"To-day there fell from four to five inches of snow. Our dear boys have had a fine ride this afternoon to Cherry Hill, Barney amongst the number. They were so rejoiced with the snow that, altho it is Sunday, I permitted them to go. They have had little or no exercise this winter. Your sons as well as myself begin to count the weeks to the 4th of March, when you will be at liberty to return to us.

"P. S.—I ought to have three letters for one, considering I have to write amongst the noise of four boys; I sometimes don't know what I am about."

"Feb. 21, 1803. It gives me infinite satisfaction to anticipate (if I should live next winter) that I shall not have to spend it so lonesome; for altho' I am surrounded by hundreds, they can give but little pleasure if the one so dear to me is absent. Our dear little flock are my present comfort. Richard asks every evening, 'what the day *to-night*? will papa be home *to-morrow*?'. The boys get to be very impatient as they now suppose you will *return* soon. Four weeks from to day, I flatter myself, will bring you to us, and my sincere prayers will be offered for your health and safety till that hour shall arrive."

"Decr. 24. '05. Mr. Sanders, my brother, is very ill; his life was despaired of last week. They have informed me he is something better, but I fear not out of danger. His children with Mrs. V. Rensselaer of Cherry Hill and Peter are all yet at Scotia, and not one returned. I should have gone up myself, but my weak health wd. not permit

me to travel ; if I should get a little better I shall go up. O how much I stand in need of your *Company* and *flow of spirits* ! It is a trying time to me ; it is my last brother, who has been a kind affectionate friend to me. I trust and hope God will grant me strength and fortitude to bear whatever He will be pleased to call me to : His will be done ! I have every reason to be grateful that He spares *you* and my *children*. O may the time soon arrive that you may again return to your wife who stands much in need of your presence at this trying time ! O may the Lord prepare you and me that when God shall call us and the time of our departure is at hand we may not meet death as a grim *Tyrant*, but as the messenger of peace to take us to our *Saviour's bosom*, where all trouble and where all separation shall have an end and where we shall be united together with the Lord !”

“Jany. 16, 1806. You informed me you had obtained the loan of some volumes of Romaine's Works : may you read them with attention, and may they bestow on you that Consolation which they are so capable to grant, and which the author is so anxious to inspire true believers with, is the wish and prayer of your Margaretta.”

“Jany. 18, 1806. Our sons desire to be remembered to you, and send their love and each six kisses. Barney says I must tell you he is a good boy, and behaves better than Richard.”

“Jany. 28, 1806. Yours of the 12th mentions that if you had been as indifferent about passing the Potomac a week ago as you were at the time you wrote, there would have been less prospect of No. 92 producing a widow. I suppose you refer to yourself ; that you were one of the party in the boat. This is already the second danger you have escaped and been preserved from. Your danger was not much less at New York, when you passed thro' that city when the stage broke down ; but you were preserved and not the least hurt. Have you duly reflected on the remarkable preservations you have had, and acknowledged them before your bountiful Preserver Who watches over you with such tender care, and has preserved and given you your life anew ? May that life be devoted to Him, and be spent in serving your bountiful Benefactor ; and may it lead us both to Him, and make us more earnest in serving Him !

“ Mr. Oothout attends to William every evening ; I don't think he makes much progress in his studies. Richard is a very bad boy and inattentive ; he has been guilty of a bad fault in the cheating way. I wish you would write to him. The more our boys grow up the more difficult I find it to govern them without you. Bernard is a fine boy, but very mischievous and not willing to learn. He can say about half his *a b c*. Where does Barney sleep?—At mama's feet, and William at the head. Richard sometimes takes William's place when he is a good boy.”

“ Feby. 8, 1806. I thank you for your kind and affectionate wishes to me and our babes on the commencement of the 16th year of our Union. May you realize them when you return to us *again*, are my sincere prayers ; and may you many years enjoy that happiness you so kindly wish us, are the ardent *wishes* of my *heart*.

“ You wrote a long letter, and on perusing it you ‘tho't it best not to trouble me with it.’ Did you ever find anything a trouble to your Margaretta that could give you pleasure or consolation ? From whatever cause some small difference may have arisen between us, I am confident I never intentionally was the cause of them. May Love and Peace long abide with us to our latest hour, are the ardent prayers of my heart. Excuse this letter : my boys are so noisy I hardly know what I write. They are in a high flow of spirits this evening, and Jack is waiting to take this to the Post Office.”

“ Feby. 19, 1806. I have had a short jaunt to Schenectady to see my brother, whom I found much better, tho' still weak and confined to his room ; I trust the warm weather will be favourable for him.

“ The family are in health except myself ; I flatter myself I am better to day. I have recd. a letter from our son John and inclose it in one of William to you. Richard is a good boy, and behaves much better. I cannot say William makes much progress in the Languages ; I fear Miller does not attend to him. I believe it will be best to put him to some private instructor. Barney is a fine lively little fellow, and begins to ask every day when his papa is coming home. Richard runs to the Post Office before he eats his breakfast every morning to see if there are no letters from his papa, and when he finds one he returns home as happy as if he had got a great present.



“You mention in one of your letters you have obtained the loan of some of the volumes of Romaine’s Works; pray be so kind and let me know your sentiments on them. I cannot be thankful enough to you for your kindness in sending them to me. They have been my chief companion in my retired life, and given much comfort and consolation; may you experience the same from them is the sincere wish of my heart. Last year at this time I began to count the days when you were to break up; but I fear by your letters I will have to calculate months yet before you come home this session. However, it is some consolation when I recollect your promise that it is to be the last year you are to be absent from home and at so great a distance from those to whom you are so dear. May you return with speed and safety to your Margaretta and babes, are my sincere prayers to God, to whose care I commit you.”

“March 6th, 1806. As to our son’s remaining at Montreal, you are best calculated to judge; I leave it entirely to yourself, as I would not wish to have my feelings consulted, for fear I might injure the child in his education and knowledge. However, I suppose there are seminaries of education within the United States of America equal if not superior to those in Canada. My greatest objection to his remaining at Canada is on account of the principles of religion which he might be persuaded by the priests to turn Roman Catholic; I refer you to his own letter, which I will inclose in this. Might we not ever repent that in endeavoring to lay the foundation for earthly knowledge we might undermine the true foundation on which our heavenly and Divine fundamental truths are founded, and on which his eternal happiness or misery must depend, and from which our earthly Joys arise and flow? For there is no other foundation on which we can build our hopes but Jesus Christ alone, and not on any works of our own, lest any man should boast—Eph: ii, 9. In the letter he mentions that the priests make use of every persuasion to prevail on him to become one of their religion, and say he is damned unless he turns. Peter V.R. arrived from Montreal this morning. He tells me he is grown very much, so that he hardly knew him; and that he speaks the French very fluently, and looks much like a Frenchman; and is reconciled to remain there during your pleasure to leave him; and that Mr. Cuyler’s family are attentive to him and very kind.



"I thank you for your kind assurances in your last letter of your intention of remaining with me and sons the remainder of life. My prayers are to the Lord that He may bring you back in safety, and to grant us strength to enable us to spend our time so here that when He shall be pleased to remove or separate us again it may be to that place of bliss where I hope and trust we all shall meet, never to be separated *more*.

"P. S.—I shall inquire if there is a good dancing-master in town, and if there is I shall send William, providing I can persuade him to go. I fear he will not go till you carry him there yourself."

"March 25th, 1806. Our family and little flock are all in health. The accounts we have of your son John are very flattering and pleasing. Our friends are all well. My little sons all join me in their love to you. Our son Bernard is very jealous of his brothers receiving letters from you and his receiving none; he pouts a half-hour after your letters are opened. I beg you to write to him one line in your next to me."

"April 5th, 1806. I have had the pleasure of receiving two letters of our son John since I wrote you last, one of the 16th and one of the 22d March, in which he informs me he is in health, and studying very hard. The intelligence you sent me of your son is very flattering to us, and no doubt as pleasing to you as to myself. I hope he may continue to merit our esteem. Our three other boys are in health and very promising children. I have brought our Richard to some regulations, and I trust his temper is broken in a great measure. Our William is a fine, sedate little lad, and Barney is all life and spirits; I cannot keep him so long in the room as to teach him his letters. Of course we will have to put him to school as soon as you return home; I cannot spare him before, as it would be too lonesome for me without him. I flatter myself that period is not far distant, but sometimes I fear they hold up the prospect of an adjournment on the 15th with a view to detain the members of Congress; for no doubt many would be off if they supposed anything would turn up in Congress that would detain them beyond that time. I suppose 5 months' absence from their families must make them anxious to return to them. The only pleasing consolation I have to cheer my spirits is, that if the time is long and passes tedious, if my friend may

return in safety he will leave me no more ; may that be soon are my sincere prayers.

"I have been very busy all week in boiling soap, and next week we will have to make garden, Jack will have to keep Paas, and after that we will go at it if I remain in health. This afternoon I am to dye 50 eggs for our boys."

My account of my grandfather and grandmother would be very incomplete if I left the training of their children out of it. From what has been said it will be seen how very affectionate were the relations between them, and how carefully the growth and education of the four boys were watched over. Tenderness strengthened by discipline characterized the parents ; while respect and obedience, warmed by affection and confidence, marked the children. The surviving records of those early days preserve a picture of a very harmonious and happy family, with simple, home-like tastes, and finding their chief delights in each other. My grandfather encouraged the habit of letter-writing in his children from their earliest days. To be a ready correspondent was a matter of the greatest importance in his estimation. It was one of his infallible marks of a gentleman that he should be able to write a good letter. Many instructions and reproofs on this subject have I received through his oversight, which I have never forgotten. He carefully preserved even the childish scrawls of his boys, and I will copy some samples of my father's, which he had filed away, to illustrate the fondness which pervaded the household.

"ALBANY, December 12th, 1801.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I am just recovering from a severe fit of sickness and feel happy to have it in my power to address you with a letter, for I almost feared after you left us that I would never

have had it in my power to write you again But through the great care of mama and caty I am almost well. Mama is very unwell with a bad cough and swelled face which we fear will fester. Brother William and Richard are happy and well. Barent makes sam dance about every night. Caty is well. papa will you be so kind as to write to mama to give me a pair of Scates for I can't prevail on her to give me a pair. mama and we are all very anxions to hear of your safe arrival at Washington. mama and all the family join with me and send Respects to you. William sends three kisses. Richar has cried all night to write a letter too and has spilt the ink over all the floor. I conclude with wishing you a happy Christmas and Remain your dutiful son

“J. SANDERS VAN RENSSELAER.”

“ALBANY, December 28th, 1801.

“DEAR PAPA

“I have just got over my sickness which I believe if it had lasted on me it would have carried me in a consumption. Mama has been very sick with a bad cough and intermitting fever, but now I think she is a little better so that she begins to sit up aunt Rensselaer takes care of her.

“Aunt Rensselaer wishes the compliments of the season.

“Papa pray write as often as you can mama spirrits rise when she Receive a letter from you.”

“ALBANY, January 1st, 1802.

“DEAR PAPA.

“I hope you will not accuse me of being saucy or impertinent If I make known to papa my sincere and hearty wish. Relying then on that kind and tender indulgence which I have ever experienced from papa, I pronounce it. My dear papa, I wish you a happy New Year! In doing this, I very well know, that I wish at the same time that I may be a good, that is, an obedient industrious boy; I am sure papa cannot be completely happy if I am disobedient. I hope I shall conduct myself in such a manner as to deserve thos mutual blessings which papa so beautifully writin in his letter to me. In my next I

will give papa the account he requested respecting our improvement. I am dear papa

“Your affectionate son

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.

“NEW YEAR’S PIECE.”

“ALBANY, January 23, 1803.

“DEAR PAPA

“I received your kind letter of the 12 of Januy. for which I thank you. It is a little remarkable that papa has forgot that the day on which he wrote me was brother Barney’s birth day. In order to answer papa’s letter, I write concerning those things he requested. I have written regularly twice a week. Papa had best write Mr. Miller, in order to ascertain how I come on in my studies, but I can assure papa I have not been kept in school for not knowing my lessons since papa’s absence. William comes on but sloyly with his Grammar. he gets but small lessons but generally has them perfect. I had almost forgotten to write that Mr. Miller has put me in Greek Testament. \* \* \*

“I remain your affectionate Son

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.

“Honble. K. K. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR.,

“in Congress,

“Washington.”

“ALBANY, February 12th, 1802.

“DEAR PAPA

“I am happy to inform that my Dear little Brothers are all in health Except William who has taken a bad Cold he was to go back to Schenectady to-day but was to unwell he rather wishes to decline going and sheds tears when ever mama speaks of his going. Richard is a fine Sailor indeed he almost Masters us all whatever I or William plays he will be in the mids of us mama teaches him he knows his A B C. Barney stands alone and will soon learn to walk. O! papa what a fine fat little fellow he is and so fond of mama that we can hardly tare him from her Chair he points to every thing he wants and calls there there.

“Mama is not so well as she was last week we have had three or four very cold days and she cough a great deal which makes her unwell and weak.

“Captain Howding is dead he was buried last Saturday

with all the Honour and pomp of war. three guns were fired over his grave. the officers Soldiers and freemasons followed his Corps to the grave. Mama sends her respects to you. My Brothers join with me and sending you a kiss

"I Remain Dear papa your affectionate son

"J. SANDERS VAN RENSSELAER."

When my father was thirteen years old he was taken by his father to Montreal and placed in the college to learn the French language. The Revolution had sent many royalists to Canada, and among them was Capt. Cornelius Cuyler, who had taken up his abode in Montreal. The presence of Mr. Cuyler and his family there, who were fellow townspeople and friends, formed an inducement which took away the repugnance of his parents to sending him so far from home, and to an institution conducted by French Roman Catholic priests. The anxiety which it caused his mother especially may be inferred from the preceding letters. His frequent epistles to his parents and brothers display an affectionate, frank and manly spirit of a schoolboy easily contented, without the usual faultfinding and grumbling of the tribe, grateful for the opportunities of improvement given to him, and diligent in making the most of them, with a whimsical idea of responsibility to his younger brothers for their good conduct and improvement, which was the occasion of some amusement to them in after days. His first letter after settling to his work was to his "*dear* mama."

"MONTREAL, Sept. 14th, 1805.

"DEAR MAMA

"An opportunity has offered itself to me and I seize it in order to write my *dear* mama. I find the French much easier than I expected and have made considerable progress



in it considering the short time I have studied. I am in perfect health and profit by it much. papa left this place on Tuesday the 11th and will reach Albany before this letter starts. I suppose he will tell mama that he has ordered a college habit to be made for me, which is a coat edged with white and Indian girdle. The English are building here a very spacious church. The Catholics have likewise a temple in which they cross themselves. I have a pleasant old Woman for my Landlady and though I do not fare *very* well, still I am pretty well situated. My Love to my relations and friends and likewise to the family and BROTHERS.

“Your sincere and affectionate Son

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

“MONTREAL, Septemr. 18, 1805.

“DEAR PAPA AND MAMA,

“I again write you by Mr. Enny that I am making some progress in French and hope to return home by next spring a compleat Scholar. Mr. Laconia pays particular attention to me and his willingness to teach me is astonishing. My general diet at present on which I live is French, Latin, Greek and Milk. Madame Lavandery is very attentive. I have an excellent bed with good sheets and my situation is comfortable. I am in fine health and spirits. \* \* \* Tell Brother William I wish he would answer my letter as I have enclosed one for him. Give my Brothers each a kiss for me. Mr. and Mrs. Cuyler send their compliments to you. My Love and Respects to all.

“Your affectionate Son,

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

“MONTREAL, October 3d, 1805.

“DEAR PAPA

“I now answer your ever welcome letter by the opportunity which offers itself to me. The tidings you informed me of were indeed distressing and I shed a few tears to the memory of the late respected John Wendell but worthy now only of our sincere pity. The happy day has approached on which I entered the second class in College. I have been examined as to my latin and was declared fit to enter with honor; although I was not perfectly well skilled in the french still I had made considerable progress. Papa can never repay Mr. Laconia for the trouble and anxiety he has



experienced on my account. He has taught me to read the french with fluency and to understand it. I have been exercised through the vacation in translating the English into french which I find to be rather troublesome at first. Construing the French into English is not very difficult. Inform mama if you please that she has nothing to fear as to my turning a Roman Catholic and I am well convinced their religion is mere show. I find the eyes of all minutely turned upon me. I hope they may never have a just reason to blush for an American the second time. Mr. Laconia sends his respects to you and hopes I shall be able to write you a french letter in two months. Mr. Cuyler's family requested me to remember their Love. My love to all. Adieu.

"Yours sincerely,

"J. S. VAN RENSSELAER."

"MONTREAL, Novemr. 9th, 1805.

"MY DEAR PAPA,

"I received your kind letter of the 13th of October, and the good news with great pleasure and hope to profit by your good advice as my greatest desire is to please my parents. \* \* \* The priests are all my friends and I profit by them much. \* \* \* Tell mama I study hard, am a fine healthy lad and shall never forsake my religion. Inform William, Richard and Bernard that if they are good boys and Learn well I shall send them something very handsome and they must likewise love mama and obey her or I will send them nothing and mama has only to say but "Crapau!" which is the name of a monstrous shocking hairy man who will immediately appear by my order and take them and skin them alive; but he is very kind when they are good and Loves *good* boys."

What effect this threat to introduce the French child's especial terror "Monsieur Crapaud" among the hobgoblins which were the stock in trade of the Dutch negro nurses in managing their charges, history does not record. It may very well be doubted whether so prudent and sensible a "Mama" availed herself of the friendly suggestion.

“MONTREAL, December 14th, 1805.

“MY DEAR MOTHER

“I begin to long to see our family and exert all my endeavours to learn the language soon that I may have the pleasure of coming home in the spring to see my friends. I live principally upon soup and good beef and my landlady is an excellent woman of a good disposition and I endeavour to merit her affections as well as all my acquaintances and friends. I study very hard and take good care of my health. The climate agrees with me perfectly and I hope mama and brothers enjoys the same health which I do. I receive likewise many kindnesses of the Cuyler family with whom I join in wishing you a happy christmas and New Year. I pray every morning and evening to God that he may protect you and my brothers from all evil whilst my father and me are absent. Read my Bibel and atend church every sabbath day in the English. I see nothing that can induce me to change my religion as I plainly see the people are blinded by the machinations of the priests the greater part of whom look more like beasts than men occasioned by their good living. Write me whom you have to attend you whilst I am gone and if the servants behave better than last Winter. Does Richard behave as a good boy and does he take care of mama? I believe so and will send him something worth seeing. No doubt William takes example after the industry of Richard and little Bug \* carries wood.”

The “french letter in two months,” which was promised October 3d, came as a New Year’s greeting for 1806, and its originality was exhibited by several mistakes which M. Laconia had judiciously left uncorrected. The following is a specimen :

“Tout les prêtres me payent l’ attention particulier et je m’ efforce de mériter leur estime. Je trouve que savant un peu de la launge Hollondoise je fais quelque progress, et la prononciation d’ alphabet est le même excepté deux lettre. A present la saison est bien douce et nous n’ avons point de neige.

“Je reste votre fils affectueusement,

“JEAN VAN RENSSELAER.”

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\*The nickname of Bernard.

“MONTREAL, January 4, 1806.

“MY DEAR MAMA

\* \* \* “I find the New year very dull being used to more ceremony than the English have. I expected to see cakes handed out as in Albany but behold what was my surprise when finding it to be a dry compliment of a happy new year.”

“MONTREAL, January 31st, 1806.

“MY DEAR MOTHER

“In what language shall I express my feelings for your kind attention in sending me those things which I so little expected. I can only say I have received the box containing a jacket, a great number of cakes, raisins, figs, cocoanut, I can't mention them all, with a letter of 25th Instant, in which was inclosed two others. I likewise received one of my father dated 17th In. for which I thank you and papa kindly. \* \* \* I have this day delivered to Mrs. Cuyler the present which you desired me to give her; she was very well pleased as she had not seen a New year's cake in some time. I am determined always to remain firm to that religion in which I was christened although I am much tempted by the priests. Their prayers seemed to me first more like an act than a worship to God, and they are continually whistling I shall be damned if I do not turn.”

The following exhibition of “older brother” authority undoubtedly produced an effect; but we are not told whether it was exactly what was intended :

“MONTREAL, February 18th, 1806.

“To Master RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER, Albany.

“MY DEAR BROTHER—I received your letter of the 29 January inclosed in one from William for which I thank you. William's account of Richard does not agree with me very well. He says you are stubborn and disobedient to mama. You must not be so or I shall not love you very much; instead of giving you the share of the good things which I shall bring home for your brothers you shall have nothing. I hope the next letter will bring me better news, as I am very much ashamed of you. I find you study, which is one consolation, and you must still continue so and

be a better boy. I am very happy you write me so often. I shall always be glad to receive your letters if you are a good boy. I am sorry little Barney has burnt his feet, but I hope they are well by this time. My love to all the family and give mama a kiss for me.

“Your affectionate Brother,

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.

“P. S.—I likewise thank you with great sincerity for the good things you have sent me.”

“MONTREAL, April 17th, 1806.

“To Master WILLIAM VAN RENSSELAER, Albany.

“MY DEAR BROTHER—Without doubt you are making great progress in your studies. Write me in your next what books you study at present and whether you have begun Ovid. I dare say Richard has begun the Latin Grammar by this time. Does he take care of mama? Is he dutiful, and does he mind his books? All those things I wish to know, as I am delighted when I hear that my dear brothers are in health and study well. I don't really know what is become of Bernard. It is a long time since I heard from him last and I am very angry because he don't write me a little letter. If you please tell him I shall hope to retourn home in four months more, and I shall be very happy, as I long to see you all at home.

“I felicit you for having seen another happy birthday. As for me it made me think of home, and I suppose you had a fine time of it. Give my love to mama and to all our friends and acquaintances.

“I remain yours affectionately,

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

“MONTREAL, March 29th.

“MY DEAR MOTHER:

“My reason for writing to you by this post is that Madame Lavandrie, my Landlady, has informed Captain Cuyler that she means to give up boarding-house on account of her old age. As this circumstance might make some difficulty to my getting in a French family in this City, the Captain has wished me to inform papa or mama that if they have no objection he will place me in the country with a priest. He has likewise informed Mr. La Saulnier of his design, who approves of it, and has written to a priest, his friend, at Point Clair, fifteen miles distant from here. If this priest

cannot take me there is likewise one at Chamblée at the same distance, and fifteen miles nearer Albany."

#### HIS MOTHER'S REPLY.

"April 14th, 1806. I am sorry to hear by your letter of the 29 March that you have to change your quarters in May. My mind was quite easy at your being at Madame Lavandre's on account of her being so kind and attentive to you, and if you remove to a priest's in the country no doubt you will find a great change in being again entirely amongst strangers and new teachers. Your papa is not returned yet, nor is there any prospect of his coming for the first month. I have been now five months alone on the 22d instant, and I believe Congress has been doing very little as yet. I sent on Mr. Cuyler's letter to Washington the same evening I received it; I trust your papa has received it by this time, and I believe he will send you an answer in time how to fix yourself in May. Should he not inform you in time how to act you must advise with Mr. Cuyler and family and Mr. Saulnier. I would not approve of your going in the same family with Mr. Cuyler's son on account of speaking the French; you might speak the English with him, which would retard your making progress in the French language.

"My sincere desire is, my son, that you may complete your French studies and return to this side of the Lakes, where I may now and then see you; once in six months I would willingly comply with. I hope, my child, after you have received your Papa's directions you will let me know how and where you are fixed, and who you board with, and who are your teachers, as I shall not feel easy until I hear you are with some careful person. Write to me often, as it is the only pleasure you can give me to let me hear from you that you are well.

"I trust, my son, you continue to read your Bible, and do not neglect that precious book amidst your other studies, for in that is true wisdom to be found, which shall not fade away, but shall last through eternity. Do you remember your mama, Papa, and brothers at the throne of Grace morning and evening? Your mama never forgets you, and do you offer your sincere prayers to your Maker and Preserver for His mercies and kindness to you. To the LORD'S care I commit you. My love to you. Your brothers send you a kiss. My son, remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, and the LORD will be with you wherever you be.'



MRS. VAN RENSSELAER TO HER HUSBAND.

“Jany. 13th, 1807. I do not doubt, my dear K., your anxiety to be with me and your little flock, but I know *now* that your duty to your Country and family calls you from me. I trust I shall be enabled to bear your absence with fortitude, and flatter myself this is the last winter I shall be separated from you.”

My grandmother had never regained her health, and I remember her as always being an invalid. This, however, did not interfere with her duties to her family, nor with an annual visit which she and my grandfather made to her brother and his family at Scotia (pronounced by them *Scote-ya*), generally in the winter.

The end of her useful and valuable life had been long expected and prepared for by her, and as it approached she told my mother that she had been troubled with doubts about her acceptance, but that they had been mercifully cleared away, and she was “rejoicing in hope,” and ready to depart. There was a touching and beautiful congruity between the manner of her life, which had been passed in doing good to others, and the scene at its ending. It recalled the death-bed of the Patriarch Jacob surrounded by his children. The evening before her departure she had all her children and grandchildren of sufficient age summoned to receive her last blessing. We found her lying in the back room of the old house, which had been her living room, in a large cradle which had been made to soothe her pain and restlessness during her lingering illness. One by one we were called to sit down beside her and hear the words which she and we knew surely would be her last on earth. When my turn came I remember that I was taken and placed in a chair beside her, and she took my



hand in hers, looked up into my face, and spoke to me slowly, tenderly, solemnly. I have no recollection of what she said; but there was only one subject of which she could have spoken, and I am sure the impression remained although the words may not be remembered, and they will surely come back at some time. I recall that some female relative put a pocket-handkerchief into my hand, taking for granted, I suppose, that I must weep. But I did not weep; perhaps I did not feel as I ought to have felt, which is very likely, as it was all very strange to me, and I could not realize its full import and its awful solemnity. Perhaps it was better in the end that I showed no more emotion than I really felt, since the impression which was really made might have been dissolved in superficial tears. But I do remember her calm and untroubled manner, the firm assurance of what she said, and the undiminished love and tenderness in her leave-taking and benediction. May their sweet influence remain with me forever! It would be a poignant grief to me to doubt that her intercessions are still heard for me and accepted through the Mediation of our Great Advocate with the Father; as for her I must ever continue to pray — “May she rest in peace, and may perpetual light shine upon her.”

## CHAPTER NINTH.

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JOHN SANDERS VAN RENSSELAER TAKES HIS DEGREE  
AT UNION COLLEGE—LETTERS FROM THE ARMY—  
MARRIAGE.

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Union College had begun to thrive under its new president, Dr. Nott, and my father entered it in 1807 in the Sophomore class, at the age of fifteen. Among his classmates were Judge Alfred Conkling, Samuel W. Jones, and Peter R. and Philip P. Livingston. Dr. Thomas T. Dewitt, Marcus T. Reynolds, John J. Van Rensselaer, Dr. John Dewitt, Judge Samuel A. Foot and John Howard Payne were in college at the same time. His class had numbered fifty-two, of whom twenty-seven received the degree of B. A. at commencement, which for some reason was delayed till 1811, when two of the classes graduated together. He had the honor entitled the "Uranian Oration." He was president of the Philomathean Society, then the leading literary society of the college. After his graduation he entered the law office of John V. Henry, who was one of the leaders at the bar of New York, and in due time was admitted to practice as an attorney in the courts.

The war between the United States and Great Britain had brought nothing decisive to either side, but many disasters to us on land. An expedition was planned in 1813 for the capture of Montreal, and was placed under the command of General Wilkinson,

who was to advance down the St. Lawrence. General Wade Hampton was put in command of a supporting army stationed on the border beyond Plattsburgh, and ordered to join Wilkinson on his advance. This he never did, and it was charged that he never meant to do it, from jealousy of Wilkinson, whose success would have given him no pleasure. Another suspicion prevalent at the time was, that the war having been brought on by southern politicians, they were willing that the north should bear the heaviest burdens without reaping the benefits of it, of which the possession of Canada would have been the greatest. However that may have been, Hampton stuck to his tents, and enraged his troops by his delays in a wilderness filled with lurking savage enemies, and by his arbitrary and overbearing treatment of them. My father's regiment, of which he was appointed quartermaster, was ordered to join Hampton, and the following letters were written during the march and the campaign :

“WATERFORD CANTONMENT, Sept. 16, 1813.

“DEAR MOTHER,

“It is with great regret that I am obliged to quit this place without bidding you once more adieu, but the claims of duty are now paramount to those of filial affection and I must bid you farewell by letter. If it had been possible I certainly would have been down ; but you must, mother, reconcile yourself to our separation for a time without it. To-morrow morning we march ; and before this reaches you we will have gone over many wearisome miles.

“The troops are in fine spirits and healthy, and they anticipate not only a pleasant time of it but a glorious one.

“Be assured of my good conduct and that prudence will dictate every part of my conduct on this expedition.

“Give my love to all and I remain sincerely yours,

“JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

“SANDY HILL, Monday Evening,  
“September 20, 1813.

“DEAR PARENTS,

“We arrived at this place this afternoon at four o'clock after a fatiguing march of twenty-one miles, and encamped for the night in a very eligible situation. The men are in good spirits, the officers generally healthy; my own health extremely good beyond my most sanguine expectation. The indisposition of Col. Talmadge unfortunately continues, and we were obliged this morning to commence our march without him at our head; he may literally be called the *head* of our regiment, Col. Hardenberg the arms and legs.

“An express reached us to-day from General Hopkins, who is in advance of us, to hasten our march and reach Plattsburgh as soon as possible. Some decisive operations against the enemy may be expected on the part of General Hampton. Remember me to all.

“I remain sincerely your dutiful son,

“JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.

“N. B.—To-morrow we reach Skeensborough. The troops will embark for Plattsburgh; I probably will go with a detachment by land.”

“CUMBERLAND HEAD, Sept. 28, 1813.

“DEAR PARENTS

“To-morrow morning we march by order of Gen. Parker for Chataugui to join Hampton's army. Hampton is inclining to the west, and it is impossible to conjecture where he means to strike a blow; he may eat his Christmas dinner at *Montreal*.

“A detachment of our regiment under the command of Major Koon marched yesterday, another under Col. Hardenbergh marched this morning for the *Grand Army*. This afternoon we visited the fleet off this place; it has received an addition of one sloop carrying three long guns; it at present consists of five sloops and two *row* gallies. Two more gallies are building at Plattsburgh to be in complete readiness in 3 weeks. We are far superior to the enemy on this lake. Our seamen are very healthy and extremely well disciplined.

“Our regiment is uncommonly healthy; we have not lost a man, and very few are on the sick list.

“I am under the necessity of following the regiment, and it may be my fortune to see *Montreal* before I see you.

You must give yourselves no uneasiness about me. I shall in no case unnecessarily expose myself, and it is my desire to see some service before my tour of duty is ended.

"If anything particularly occurs I shall inform you of it by every opportunity. My business as Quarter-master is arranged and all necessary vouchers taken; my duties hereafter will be light; my opportunities to observe and improve by my observations will consequently be greater. My hair trunk I have deposited at Plattsburgh with Mr. Wm. Gilliland, Assistant Commissary.

"Do not write to me till I inform you that I am stationary. My health is excellent. Give my love to all. I remain

"Yours sincerely,

"JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER."

"MORESTOWN, ROBERTS' TAVERN,

"Thirty-two miles from Plattsburgh, Oct. 5, 1813.

"DEAR PARENTS

"In my last letter I stated that we were on the march to join Hampton's army; a different distribution of our force has since taken place. We left Plattsburgh on the 1st Instant and marched to Pomeroy's tavern, about twenty-six miles west of Plattsburgh; where an express overtook us from Gen. Barker ordering the force under the immediate command of Gen. Hopkins to return with the greatest possible haste to Plattsburgh, an attack from the British on that village being apprehended. Our march was commenced at seven o'clock in the evening for Plattsburgh, and continued till ten o'clock thro' a continual rain and the most obscure darkness I ever witnessed. The next morning I was ordered to this place to take charge of three companies which were stationed here to keep up the communication between Plattsburgh and the four corners where Hampton's army is stationed.

"I am informed from a credible source that in a few days Hampton will take up his line of march for Montreal. He means to cross the St. Lawrence at LaPrairie; he is very sanguine of success, and his troops are in fine spirits. The Indians are hanging about his piquet guard and picking off the sentries. Two days ago at 4 o'clock in the afternoon a party of Indians attacked the advance guard, killed a Lieutenant and one private and shattered the thigh of another; last night one sentry was wounded; no Indians on the part



of the enemy were killed in these attacks. A large body of our troops are this evening to enter the woods for the purpose of scouring them and to ferret out the savages. About eighty Indians are attached to our army. A Frenchman by the name of Mayeau commands about two hundred Indians on the part of the British; they are said to be in the woods adjacent to the army.

"A deserter entered our camp at this place this morning with a passport from Gen. Hampton. He states that he belonged to a force of four hundred British and four hundred Indians who were sent to cut off our advance posts, but were foiled in their design by a premature attack on and brave resistance of the advance guard, the commanding officer of which, a Lieut., was killed, as above stated.

"The rifle corps under the command of Capt'n. Deforest has refused to cross the lines, to the great vexation of Gen. Hampton. The unreasonable severity and arbitrary conduct of the general regular officers have occasioned the refusal to volunteer. It is pretty generally understood that our brigade will not cross; I am sorry for it. We will, it is said, be stationed at Champlain; Hampton says he will make us fight.

"The war bears heavy on the inhabitants of this frontier; provisions of all kinds are scarce; the army, however, is pretty well supplied. Fatigue parties of regulars and militia are out daily to open and improve the roads leading to the army from Plattsburgh, in this respect the war is beneficial to this part of the State.

"My health is extremely good; I never enjoyed better; Charley is in tolerable order, considering the scarcity of forage. Remember my best respects to B. Sanders and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Fonda, brothers, Jane and family. My letter, I find, is growing unusually long.

"I remain sincerely

"your affectionate son,

"JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER."

"FORT HAMPTON, CHATAUQUEI, Octr. 15th, 1813.

"DEAR PARENTS,

"I embrace the opportunity offered me by Lt. Taylor of the Schenectady Flying Artillery, who leaves the Four Corners three miles from this place to attend the Court martial about to convene at Waterford, to inform you that our brigade reached this place four days ago. We now com-



pose the advance guard of Hampton's army ; we are about two miles and a half from the lines. We anticipate no danger from an attack ; our encampment is strongly laid out in the form of a square, our rear supported by a strong breastwork and some blockhouses.

"Last night the Indians paid us a visit, and within gun shot of the sentries of our piquet guard without being discovered, carried off a Mr. Smith and a young man about seventeen years old. Mr. Smith effected his escape about five miles from home, and as soon as possible alarmed our camp. The drum beat to arms about daybreak in the morning, and three companies with a small corps of dragoons were detached in pursuit of the enemy ; but the hunt proved unsuccessful. At night the neighborhood seems to be much invested with owls, wolves, bears, &c. ; but we understand *Trap*. Our regiment is very healthy ; we have not yet lost a man by sickness, and very few are on the sick-list. No inflammatory disorders are prevailing among the troops. My health never was better.

"From our encampment we have a distant view of Canada and the St. Lawrence. Our situation is a very healthy one on rising ground, rather too much exposed to the north-western winds very prevalent here at this season of the year. The cold is already intense ; we however have wood enough, and are not sparing in the use of it.

"Gen. Hampton yesterday issued his order for the troops under his command to be in readiness after to-day to march within two hours notice ; every team that enters his line of sentinels is pressed to transport baggage ; officers and men are ordered to carry with them two blankets and one spare shirt to a man. Something decisive is intended.

"I have formed a mess with Dr. Ten Eyck, Adjutant Griswold, and *Chaplain* Foster ; the agreement is in writing ; they promise to pay me  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the cost of stores and kitchen furniture. My horse proves to be sound in wind and limb beyond my most sanguine expectations ; he has not been shod since I left Albany, nor has he wanted till now ; he is worth more than \$125 ; should he be killed or stolen while in service the United States will remunerate me for his loss ; he is in high order. My waiter is a faithful fellow ; I like him much.

"I have received the package of papers you sent, but your letter has not reached me. Pray do not write by mail till I request it ; I have reason to believe that letters are

broken open and suppressed in the Postoffices about here ; take advantage when you can of a private conveyance. Give my love and respects to all the family ; to Brother Barnard in particular ; tell him to make himself a man, which experience has taught me can alone be done by making himself learned and wise. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Fonda, Major Beeckman, Mr. and Mrs. Sanders, &c., &c.

“I subscribe myself your sincerely affectionate son,

“JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.

“P. S.—By Mr. John Verner, Junr., living in Lion Street, Albany, I sent you my public receipts.”

The sentinels of the camp were incited to watchfulness by the following authentic anecdote :

“A British army, in the old French war, was encamped on a plain in the autumn when the nights are long. One morning the sentinel at a particular post was found dead with an Indian knife in his back. The next night the same thing occurred ; and the same the next night, although a picked man had been put on the post. The fourth night the sentinel was ordered to fire at anything that approached him, no matter what it might be. Nothing however appeared, till between two and three o'clock he observed some hogs coming out of the darkness, grunting and rooting up the ground. But that was no unusual sight in that region, and not thinking it worth while to waste powder and lead on swine he kept on up and down his beat watching their movements. Presently he observed one larger than the rest not more than twenty yards off, and when he looked at him again he had come nearer and was apparently working towards his rear. He remembered his orders, levelled his musket and fired, and lo ! the hog reared itself and a painted Indian sprang out of the skin with a wild yell, and

fell dead at his feet." That was what they meant by "Trap."

"NEW YORK, May 6, 1814.

"DEAR FATHER,

"Yesterday I arrived here after a pleasant passage of 33 hours; and this afternoon I will pay my respects to Mr. and Mrs. Beekman if the weather will permit.

"An express from New London reached this place this morning with information that the British 74 Bulwark had arrived off that port, and brought out new instructions to blockade rigorously *all* the American coast from *Eastport* to *New Orleans*, and to *sink*, burn and *destroy* every thing along the American coast. An armistice was concluded on the 5th of March last between Bonaparte and the Allied powers on the Continent; and that a Congress was sitting in France for the purpose of settling a general peace. The above information is also contained in a letter from New London dated the 4th inst., after the Mail closed. The repeal of the Embargo is thus rendered abortive and of no avail. Write to Judge Talmadge respecting Machin's commission, and I will bring it up with me on Saturday next. My love to Mother and family.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Yours sincerely,

"J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.

"K. K. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR."

"NEW YORK, August 30, 1814.

"DEAR FATHER:

"Our friends at this place are in health, but apprehensive of an attack by the enemy. Yesterday I dined with Col. Varick; O my degraded country! was the general exclamation at table. He considers our country as irretrievably ruined; nothing but the miraculous interposition of Providence can save us.

"The resistance made to the enemy at Washington and in its vicinity was trifling; a few choice spirits fought and fell. We fought them in *detachments*; they fought us in column; the fight was not general; our main body fled at the noise of their own fire. Com. Barney and his brave seamen made a noble stand near Washington and disputed the entrance of the city. The navy yard and shipping were destroyed by ourselves; the capitol, palace, cannon foundry

and other public buildings were blown up or burnt by the enemy. Private property was respected; the press and printing materials of the National Intelligencer have been carried on board of the British fleet. Information has reached us that the enemy are retiring from Washington towards the Patuxent to re-embark; they will not march to Baltimore, as was dreaded. It is now ascertained, and is so stated in the morning papers of this day, that the enemy are not more than 6,000 in number; but such a panic have they struck in the inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland that they are able to cope against 60,000 militia. My opinion that in proportion as the militia are numerous so are they liable to be defeated, will be found to be correct.

"I have renounced the pride I once took in being a citizen of the United States; in my country I feel dishonored; I now am anxious for the honor of my native State; the Capitol of the State of New York will I trust prove itself invulnerable. I now believe that Albany *may* be taken if Lake Champlain is in possession of the enemy. It will be attempted if adequate preparation be not made. Let us swear effectually to defend our *Capitol* or be buried in its ruins. The time has come when the arts of peace must be banished for a while; we must all become soldiers; the Conscription law in full operation, in preference to submission to an invading foe.

"On Friday I will reach Albany. My respects to Mother and family.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obt. son,

"JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.

"K. K. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR."

An allusion in the previous letter explains how my father became acquainted with my mother. His favorite cousin, Catharine Sanders, had married Mr. Gerard Beekman of New York, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. James Beekman, had a beautiful niece named Ann Dunkin. She was the only daughter of Robert Henry Dunkin of Philadelphia, and Elizabeth, daughter of John Watkins of Harlem Heights. Her father was dead, and, although her home was in Philadelphia,

where her grandmother, Mrs. Ann Dunkin, resided, she spent much of her time with her grandmother, Mrs. Watkins, at Harlem, and with her great-aunt at the same place, the widow of Lieutenant-General Maunsell. Her aunt Beekman lived near them in "The Vale" under "Breakneck Hill," before Mr. Beekman succeeded to "The Mount." The circle of relatives and neighbors was large, embracing the Watkinses, the Bradhursts, the Schieffelins, the Hamiltons, the Moores, the Clarks and others who have passed away. The intercourse between the country and the city was frequent, and during one of his visits to his cousin in town the acquaintance was formed which ripened into an attachment and engagement, which gave great satisfaction to the kindred on both sides. My mother was a great favorite with all for her amiable disposition and engaging qualities. Being the only granddaughter of Mrs. Ann Dunkin, after whom she had been named, she was especially cherished by her, and had been given the best advantages which her native city, Philadelphia, afforded — and they were not small even at that day — including instruction in the mysteries of the housewife and the arts of the pastry-cook. She wrote a remarkable distinct and lady-like hand, and her letters were models of clearness, sincerity and good sense. In these qualities they reflected her own character; she was so sincere and guileless that she could not understand insincerity in others; and she was so filled with goodwill and kindness to all that she could not appreciate the malice and ill-will of some. They were married in Philadelphia, March 12, 1816, and took up their residence in Albany in a two-story house on the north



side of Washington street between Hawk and Swan streets, where their first child was born August 1, 1817, and christened Dunkin Henry, causing great joy in all the branches of the family, and awakening a wide-spread interest amongst their numerous friends.

“NEW YORK, 10th April, 1818.

“DEAR SIR,

I beg leave to say to you that I have been called to strict account about seeing my Friend John S. Van Rensselaer's promising Son, and the only two good excuses I could offer were that I did not dare to be out *at night* ; this was available. The next, that you detained me at the Bottle until it was too late, and here I failed in my Justification. So you must not be disappointed if the ladies should go to Albany to see for themselves. Will they travel without me, do you think ?

“Accept the best wishes of your Friend  
“and affect. Hble Servt.

“RICHD. VARICK.

“KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER,

“Albany.”

The same year in which this friendly letter was written they took their first born to visit his venerable great-grandmother, Mrs. Ann Dunkin, in Philadelphia. She was the widow of Lieutenant Roberts Dunkin of the British navy, who had died on service in 1776, leaving her with two sons. His brother, Sir William Dunkin, was one of the justices of the King's bench at Calcutta, and corresponded frequently with his nephew, my grandfather. She was a woman of remarkable character and intelligence, filled with Irish humor and vivacity, goodness and kindness, an earnest Christian, without cant, and passionately fond of her granddaughter and her children. It is needless to remark that a hearty welcome awaited them.



“PHILADELPHIA, May 13th, 1818.

“DEAR FATHER,

“After a pleasant passage of 19 hours we arrived in good condition at New York, and after breakfast proceeded to Mr. G. Beekman's. Mr. Beekman and wife with little Jim we found in good health; they regretted that you and mother were not of the party, and expressed in strong terms their wishes to see you in New York. From Broome Street we bent our course to Harlem, saw Mr. and Mrs. James Beekman, and dined with Dr. S. Watkins, who was more than glad to see us and the boy. Mrs. Dunkin remained at the Doctor's; Ann Dunkin, and myself returned to town that evening, and started for Philadelphia at 11 o'clock Monday morning in the steamboat line to Brunswick. There we were furnished with a commodious hack, and reached Trenton at ten o'clock at night. Dunkin soon became accustomed to the jolting of the carriage, and after the first ten miles slept very quietly the greater part of the way. He grumbled at one time a good deal, but we discovered it was owing to hunger, and after being fed at the first stopping place he amused himself with looking at the horses until he dropped asleep on my lap. He has not suffered in the least from the jaunt, has been all the time in the best possible humour, and looks heartier than ever, and is the admiration of all who have seen him; his legs in particular are considered wonderful. Our passage down the Delaware was delightful; we reached this city at ten yesterday morning.

“Mrs. A. Dunkin is in fine health, and looks better and younger than when I first became acquainted with her; she desires to be remembered to you and Mother and the boys. Make our love to mother and the boys, and believe us truly your affectionate children,

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

“NEW YORK, 18th June, 1818.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I saw my friend John S. Van Rensselaer at Philadelphia. *His* son and *your* Grandson was asleep; so that I did not see him; and the good lady was from Home.

“Remember us to Mrs. K. K. Van Rensselaer and her

Sons; also to Cherry Hill Family. Accept my best wishes  
and the respects due to a Friend

“from Yours,

“RICHD. VARICK.

“KILIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR.,

Alby.”

It was on this visit, so full of happiness and hope for the young parents, their kindred and friends, that Mrs. Dunkin sat for the portrait to Sully, one of the most celebrated of the Philadelphia school of artists, holding the dear little babe in her lap, which is in my possession. The likenesses are speaking, that of the child having re-appeared in some of the grandchildren.

“NEW YORK, June 24th, 1818.

“DEAR FATHER,

“We arrived at Mr. J. Beekman’s at 10 o’clock yesterday morning after a pleasant journey from Philadelphia, which place we left on Monday at noon. Dunkin stood the fatigue of travelling extremely well, and never was in higher spirits than when the roads were bad and the carriage jolting in all directions; he is in fine health. Ann still nurses him; she is thin in flesh, but enjoys good health, and is very much benefitted by travelling.

“The old lady, Mrs. Ann Dunkin, was very loath to part with us; she prevailed on us to put off the evil hour for several days; at last it came; she accompanied us to the boat, and left us in tears.

“We shall remain a few days at Mr. Beekman’s, and shall then pay a visit to Dr. Watkins, who expects us.

“Mrs. E. Dunkin has not yet seen us.

“Our love and compliments to Mother, brothers and friends, and believe us as usual yours affectionately,

“J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

Was there a presentiment of coming evil in the tears of the venerable grandmother when she bade them farewell? There might have been. She never

saw her pet and pride again in this life. He was taken the next year, September 18, 1819, by a distressing accident from boiling water. I do not believe that his mother, whose affection for her children was absorbing, ever entirely recovered from this blow; she could not bear to look at his likeness, and I do not remember to have heard her mention her lost babe's name.

I was born in the Washington street house April 15, 1819, and the first daughter, Margaretta Sanders, January 1, 1821. This year my father made the journey to Philadelphia by land, driving mother and the two children in his own carriage.

“ PHILADELPHIA, May 18th, 1821.

“ DEAR FATHER,

“ We arrived here on Wednesday evening in the carriage. The children stood the fatigue of travelling extremely well and are in the best of health. I need not mention how rejoiced their great-grandmother was to see them. They are now perfectly at home and have the full range of the house. The horses appear as well as when we started, and travel considerably better; we came from Princeton to this city on Wednesday. We staid a few days at Dr. Watkins'; who treated us very kindly.

“ The old lady, Mrs. Dunkin, expresses great regret that you and mother have not been able to come on this Spring; it would give her great pleasure to see both or either of you or brothers.

“ Maunsell is standing near me and begging me for my pen '*to 'ite to ganpa,*' as he says. Our love to Mother and brothers.

“ Yours affectionately,

“ J. S. VAN RENSSELAER.”

## CHAPTER TENTH.

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### LIFE AT "99 STATE STREET," ALBANY.

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My grandfather had conveyed a lot to my father in State street next to the Capitol grounds, and there my Grandmother Dunkin built a spacious dwelling, into which we moved when I was about three years old, and where my second brother was born January 29, 1823, and named Charles Watkins, after my grandmother's second brother. After him came the second daughter, named after her grandmother and great-grandmother, Ann Eliza, April 5, 1825; then Lydia Beekman, May 25, 1827; Harriet Letitia (after her great-grandmother, Harriet Schuyler, and Lady Macnaghten, cousin to her grandfather Dunkin), January 19, 1830; Samuel Watkins, February 28, 1832; Catherine Sanders (from Mrs. G. Beekman), November 16, 1834; and Louisa ("the baby"), March 17, 1838, whose arrival was announced by my grandfather in his humorous way as "a present from St. Patrick." We were brought up in the strictest affection for each other, which time only served to strengthen. I remember being greatly disturbed for the safety of my baby sister during a thunder storm at night, and being rebuked by my mother for asking her whether God would not be wicked to kill "little Ann Eliza" with the lightning? Perhaps, however, a thought of being protected myself under the shield of the baby's innocence may have prompted my anxiety for her's.

One of my mother's most pronounced traits was generosity and self-forgetfulness. When my grand-

mother Van Rensselaer died she declined to take the full portion of her clothing which fell to her, and shared it with my Uncle Richard for his children, as she thought them much more in need of them. This explains the allusion in the following characteristic letter of dear Aunt Beekman, who even then was suffering from the painful disease of dropsy which took her away :

“ MOUNT PLEASANT, October 21st, 1830.

“ MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER,

“ I have received many entertaining Letters from you, which proves your great affection and interested feelings for me and my dear Mr. Beekman, who often exclaims, ‘ I would give a Dollar if dear Betsy Dunkin was here ! ’ Thank heaven ! he is much better ; and as for myself, I eat a little, sleep a little, sew a little. *snuff* a little, and read a little ; and so, little by little, I am getting up hill, as the poor Pilgrim did when he wrote his Progress, and I do sincerely hope that I may die as good a Christian as he did without having the *world* on my *back*. Doctor Watts expects to make a cure of me ; he is very ill, and Doctor Kissam attends us now.

“ Mrs. MacKesson had a private wedding ; they proceeded the same day to Boston, where she as well as Mr. Field was delighted. They are now at Washington, and will make a great display of beautiful clothes made for the jaunt. Mrs. Bradhurst is happy beyond description. The Bride sent me a large Plum Cake, which I shall keep for you to eat of next Spring, and my dear Ann and her good Husband, whom I admire very much. Elizabeth Moore is no better.

“ Your amiable Daughter has got great credit in giving a certain part of her Mother’s clothes to Mr. Richard’s children. I am delighted at the improvement you are making by adding a retiring room, and your family will be so comfortable sitting at meals that I really should like to take a peep and say, ‘ How do you all do ? ’ Thank my very dear Ann for her beautiful letter, and a thousand thanks for the stockings, which I am delighted with. Mrs. Gerard is far from being well.”

She was taken August 29, 1833, and her death deprived us of a most amiable, affectionate, and devoted kinswoman and friend. Her early life had been clouded by a great calamity in the loss of her husband, Captain Drew of the British navy, who perished with his ship, the *De Braak*, off Cape Henlopen, May 25, 1798. (Notitia F.)

My beloved great-grandmother, Ann Dunkin, died June 20, 1832, having my dear Mother with my sister Ann Eliza and our baby brother Sam, to comfort and soothe her in her last hours. Her remains lie under a large marble slab in the "Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church" burial ground at the south-west corner of Fourth and Pine streets in Philadelphia. She was born in Coleraine, county Derry, Ireland, (of which she never tired of talking), June 4, 1740, and retained to the last her clearness of intellect and mental vigor and vivacity.

For upwards of twenty years God had graciously withheld the dreaded visitation of death from our immediate home circle, but at last it came upon us in the sudden calling away of our dear little Sam, November 17, 1839. It came like lightning from a clear sky. It was my really first sharp and painful experience in the death of those I loved, and the impression has not been effaced after a lapse of forty-seven years. He was a remarkably sweet, affectionate and amiable boy, to whom we were all fondly attached, and in whom my mother and grandmother took especial delight, as they showed in their pleasure in describing his qualities to me.

"Little Sam," my mother wrote, "is the most devoted child to the Bible; he spends an hour at a time, and that



several times a day and almost every evening reading it, and learns all the pretty hymns he can find, and can repeat most of the prayers he learns in the Bible. When he was so ill he could hardly hold up his head he would not go to bed without saying his prayers, and requested me to read the prayer for a sick child. I am in hopes he will be a minister; he already has influence enough to make Charles read the Bible on Sunday evening."

A few months after, while at the Seminary in New York, I received the following grievous tidings by the hands of a special messenger:

"ALBANY, Sunday morning, Novr. 17, 1839.

"MY DEAR MAUNSELL,

"I have sad news to communicate to you — I hope you will have fortitude to bear it with proper resignation. It has pleased the Almighty Disposer of events to take from our arms your blessed brother Samuel. He died this morning of congestion of the viscera, which set in on Friday night with vomiting, which excited no alarm until he became delirious on Sunday morning.

"We purpose to have the funeral obsequies on Tuesday next at 3 o'clock P. M.; this will enable you to reach Albany early on Tuesday morning. Ascertain if your uncle Barney is still in New York, at the Pacific Hotel, and apprise him of this most afflicting event. We are all in the deepest grief, but otherwise well.

"Very truly

"your afflicted father,

"J. S. VAN RENSSELAER."

The effect of this second blow upon our poor mother can only be described in her own heart-broken words:

"No time or circumstance can ever efface from my mind the heart-rending occurrence in our house; at every step, indeed every look, I miss my darling boy. The stroke that took him sank deep in his Mother's heart, and left a void never to be filled. Oft in the still hour of night the question enters my mind, Where is my Samuel? is his blessed spirit near me? or has it lost all recollection of his earthly friends? are we never to meet again? or, if we meet, are

we to recognize each other? These are anxious questions, and I fear cannot be satisfactorily answered. In the Banner of the Cross of Novr. 2d there is a beautiful piece on the Snowdrop, which is very agreeable to those who have been bereaved of young children. Old Doer. Yates spent a day with us; he is the most perfect believer I ever met with. He said, if our little boy had been his son, with such a disposition, he thought he should jump up and sing Hallelujah to GOD for taking him, as his happiness must be perfected without the trials awaiting other Christians of more mature age. But for all I cannot cease to mourn my loss. The dear little fellow was placed last week beside his beloved brother Dunkin at Cherry Hill; 'they were lovely in life, and in death they were not divided.' Do not particularly refer to this letter when you write, as I do not wish your Grandmother to see it; she grieves so much for our little darling that I do not wish to have her feelings aroused by what I have written."

This thoughtful consideration for the feelings of others was one of her strongest characteristics, which not even her own sufferings could overcome. Her grief at the bereavement was fully shared by her affectionate mother, who wrote:

"The tribute of affection you pay to the memory of your dear departed brother truly accords with our feelings. For myself I am a constant mourner at the hard dispensation of Providence in snatching him away in a few hours without any apparent disease. I try to comfort myself by thinking that if there was any communication from the dead to the living, he would say to me, 'Grandmama, don't mourn for me; I am better off than you; I have passed my short journey on earth, and had an easy passage out of it, and am at rest and free from all the troubles of life.' I can't look around without seeing something to remind me of his lovely and happy disposition, always more ready to bestow pleasure than receive it.

"I send you Doer. Yates' sermon on 'Thanksgiving day, towards the end of which you will see an allusion to your dear departed brother. The book you sent your Mother written by Doer. Dorr is the most comforting I ever met with on that most important subject, the recognition of

departed spirits in the realms of bliss. How it will ease the bed of death by me to be welcomed by my little dear and perfect boy! But his state of bliss must be more exalted than any adult can aspire to."

My mother's throne was in her nursery, and her delight in watching her children and their ways was unbounded, while her distress when they were ill, unruly or unhappy was painful to witness. Her letters always contained some fond or lively allusion to their health, sayings or doings, and thus give a vivid and accurate picture of our home life. The youngest, it is needless to remark, were the chief objects of her care and observation. Thus she wrote December 14, 1841:

"Harriet and myself are both indebted to you for a letter. Harriet was perfectly delighted when her letter reached her hands; she requested to open it herself, but then had not courage to break the beautiful seal; which operation I was permitted to perform, on condition not to look into the contents until she had read it herself; 'for only look,' said she, 'how nice and large brother Maunsell has written on purpose for *me* to read it.' But her agitation was so great that I doubt much if she could have read it had it been printed. She however learned it by heart, and then *read* it to Eliza and the two Catherines."

And so after a dangerous illness of "the baby," January 30, 1845:

"Here I am sitting by the fire, with a thankful heart that I can inform you that your beloved sister Loue is recovering from the most dangerous attack of croup I ever witnessed. On Saturday last Docr. Wing told me he had not the least expectation of saving her. Docr. J. F. Townsend (his father was ill) urged leeches to be applied to her throat in addition to a blister which had been applied to her throat early in the morning; which, under Providence, saved her life. Your aunt Matilda sat up with us, and about two o'clock on Sabbath morning Louisa became very restless,

complained of great pain all over, and said she was choking; we feared she was dying. Matilda applied mustard plasters to her chest and feet, which caused a perspiration, and she fell asleep and awakened much relieved; but she was not considered out of danger until yesterday. She lost her voice for five days, and could not speak above a whisper; but to-day she speaks quite distinctly, and is at this moment playing with her dolls on the bed. She is too weak to sit up long, but has a good appetite, and I hope will be quite well again. I asked her what message to brother Maunsell? She says, 'Tell him I send him a hundred kisses.' The arrival of her dear little nephew gives her great joy, although she has not been well enough to see him yet, as he is at Mrs. Russell's, where he arrived with his parents on Tuesday; in a few days they are coming to stay with us. Ann Eliza received a letter from Lydia to-day, written in her usual style of animation: she says little Gerard Beekman has been very ill, but is better."

The engagement of her eldest daughter was naturally a subject of the greatest interest to her as to all the family.

"ALBANY, March 15th, 1843.

"DEAR MAUNSELL,

"Your Father has informed you of your sister's engagement to Mr. Russell; as you are unacquainted with the gentleman I will introduce him to you by a short description. In person he is tall, fine complexion, black eyes and wears spectacles, fine teeth, and in manners quite the gentleman, and very lively; is a member of the Temperance Society, and last, though not least, attends the Episcopal Church when at home. He owns and occupies a splendid place a few miles below Hudson, which is very handsomely furnished. The engagement meets the approbation of both families; but your sentiments are yet to be learned, and he has expressed an anxiety as to what that will be. He is really a fine fellow, you cannot help liking him, and is a most devoted lover. I wish you knew him; but as that is not the case you must take it on trust that you will be happy to receive him as a member of our family, as all of us are. Do not delay to write immediately."

How thoroughly she cultivated mutual affection and self-forgetfulness in her children is illustrated by this little incident :

"The other day I asked the three little girls if it would not be better for us to give up going to Whitehall this summer, and send you the money to come here? They all agreed at once, but on second thoughts Louisa said she wanted to go, and she thought we might go if she sent her New Year money to brother Maunsell, for she wanted him to come home too. I told her it would not be enough, so she went and consulted Kate, and Kate came into the measure at once, provided no other way could be thought of. They will let you have their New Year money ; so you see you are a *pet* with your little sisters. Poor Hatty is so generous she can never keep a cent, and has none to offer."

All her heart went out to her first grandchild ; the only one, alas ! in whom it was granted her to renew her maternal happiness.

"ALBANY, July 9th, 1844.

"DEAR MAUNSELL,

"We shall not be able to visit you this week ; Kate's eyes are no better, and I fear we shall have to go to New York to consult Doctr. Rogers about them. Dear little girl ! she is very patient, and willing to submit to any thing to be able to go to Whitehall ; but I do not believe she will this summer.

"Margaretta and her dear little boy and Joseph, after spending a week with us, went home yesterday ; her babe is a lovely little creature ; we miss him very much."

My brother Charles had shown a predilection for a seafaring life, and my father had secured a position for him on a Boston ship sailing to China. Her fortitude was never more clearly shown than on this occasion. It was a final leavetaking ; she did not survive to welcome him home.

"ALBANY, Novr. 7th, 1844.

"MY DEAR MAUNSELL,

"I am now sitting up in bed to answer your letter just received. I have had the rheumatism for more than a week,



being attacked the day after your Father took Charles to Boston, which was the 27th ult. The vessel, which is called the Yumchi, was to sail to-day or to-morrow. Charles has behaved with a manliness and noble and generous spirit which does him great credit, and has raised him in the esteem of every one. It was necessary to raise \$300 to pay Capt. Steele to instruct him in Navigation, and give him a footing equal to Captain's clerk on board the ship; your Grandma advanced the money, and he signed a paper that she was to repay herself out of his income. After he left the house she thought she would make him a present of it, and wrote him a letter to tell him so. He wrote an answer which would move a heart of stone, returning her letter and thanking her; at the same time declining to receive it, as he said it was more than his brother or sisters had had; and that he wished it given, if she pleased, to Kate and Loue, who were not so well provided for by Aunt Beekman as the rest.

"Poor Charles sailed last Saturday. He wrote a most elegant feeling farewell letter to us all, which none of us could read aloud. He said, although he left home with saddened feelings, he would not return, as here he was nothing, and he felt that a bright career was opening before him, where he could be useful to himself and others. You will have much to hear about him, and the advantages he has gone under."

Under a quiet exterior mother had a keen sense of humor, and liked a good joke, which was undoubtedly due to her Irish descent. She was fond of repeating the amusing mistakes in the prattle of the little ones, such as little Loue's saying that a certain likeness made her "a perfect *fight*," that her teacher had had "a tooth *distracted*, which made her nervous," and that she "was so 'elighted with budder Maunsell's sermon that she fell asleep." This was one of the means by which she made our home bright, and attached us to it. She was quite apt and ready in turning a passing incident into an amusing channel and drawing out merriment, as in the following:



"We like the idea of having you nearer very much, as we understand by your letter you think favorably of Mrs. Mancius' invitation to Stillwater; as long as she lives I suppose the church will be able to support a minister, and after you may have a better situation. I read that part of your letter in a way to excite considerable alarm, in which you state the correspondence with a young widow; pausing long enough to give time for your Grandma to lay down her knife and fork (as we were at dinner), and exclaim: 'Oh dear, every other day! What I always feared! He will be taken in yet! Some designing widow, older than himself, I dare say!' 'Yes,' says I, 'a great deal older;' and soon dissipated her fears by telling who it was; and no one stands higher in her esteem than Mrs. Mancius, for getting you from Whitehall. There is another widow who is very jealous that you did not call to see her when you were at Albany—no less a person than Mrs. P. S. Van Rensselaer of State Street. She told Miss Angelica V.R., formerly you called on her, and she did not know why you neglected her now."

The following amusing description of a visit to Scotia after an election is in the same vein; alas! all mentioned in it are gone but one:

"Last Saturday Margaretta, Harriet, Samuel and myself took a ride to Schenectady, and found our friends in high spirits in consequence of the result of the Election; but particularly on account of Theodore's election, who you know ran in opposition to De Graff. Each individual of the family is very much elated, and full of self-congratulation on account of the various methods of either fixing their friends, or outwitting their opponents; indeed your cousin Peter has been carried on the shoulders of the populace into the committee-room (as he says.) Mrs. Theodore, expecting a general congratulatory visit from all her husband's political friends, removed the furniture from the first floor; and it was well she did, for the next day they had to take the *hoe* to get the mud off the floor. All the students from College went over; they had a band of music and a cannon: in short, such things were never witnessed before at Scotia. We called on Mrs. Hersey; as usual she was talking all the time of you. I asked what I should write you from her? She replied, Give my love, and tell him I am very well, and

so is Mr. Hersey, and Sally, who I am sure made an excuse to go to Albany when he had sore eyes to see him, for we think all the world of him; and Mary is well too; and I remember him every night in my prayers, and Mr. Washbon too, for he is another good young man."

Relatives and friends visited each other more frequently in those days than they seem to do now, and a cordial, if informal, hospitality prevailed, which took pleasure in welcoming the coming guest. This was one of the great delights of our home, and as the heads were favorites with their kindred, it was often enjoyed. My mother had a peculiar gift in making her visitors happy, and the circle was a large one. In her minute account to her absent children of everything which took place at home she did not omit this feature.

"We have had the pleasure of seeing some of our good friends from New York, Schenectady, and Glen this week. To commence with New York: On Monday afternoon we were agreeably surprised by a call from Mrs. Field, who came with her husband to lobby for the New York and Albany rail-road. On Tuesday morning Mr. James W. Beekman called and accepted an invitation to dinner to meet Mrs. Glen and Mrs. P. Sanders and Margaretta and Mrs. Russell, and last, but not least, Master J. Russell, who, by the way, is improving every day; I do not know how we shall spare him to go among the *Anti-renters*. In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Field took tea here. Lydia was well last Saturday, but did not know that Mr. Beekman was coming up the river, or, I presume, would have made a bold push to come with him."

My grandmother, Elizabeth Dunkin, was a very interesting character, with marked traits which could not fail to make their impression on a household of which she formed so important a part as ours in Albany. Her father was John Watkins, merchant at St. Christophers, West Indies, where she was born;

and her mother was Lydia Stillwell, youngest of "the six beautiful sisters," daughters of Richard Stillwell and Mercy Sands. While she was a child her parents made the voyage to England, of which she retained some recollections; after which her father bought land on Harlem Heights, overlooking the Hudson and Harlem river, where he established his family in a dwelling which stood on the Kingsbridge road at what is now the corner of Avenue St. Nicholas and 152d street, which was destroyed by fire only a few years ago. This was the ground on which was fought September 16, 1776, the battle of Harlem Heights, in which Washington was successful.\* They were driven from this on the occupation of New York by the British in 1776, and took up their abode at Paramus, New Jersey, till the close of the war, when they returned to their dwelling, where they had the signal honor of entertaining George Washington at dinner, an event of which my grandmother never ceased to speak with all the dignity which it deserved. She was married December 20, 1792, at the house of her uncle, Major-General John Maunsell, British army, by the Rev. Benjamin Moore, D. D., of Trinity Church, New York, afterwards the second Bishop of New York, whose wife was her own cousin. When my mother was married she went with her to reside in Albany, where she passed the remainder of her life. She was a woman of great intelligence, much information and large experience. Her affections were warm, her will vigorous, and her prejudices strong. Her devotion to her kindred was ardent and persistent; she was a most devoted mother and grandmother, and took no

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\* Mrs. Lamb's History of the City of New York, Vol. 2, pages 128, *seq*



Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington presents  
his respectful compliments to Miss  
Watkins, and offers his grateful  
thanks for her curious present  
of a laurel wreath, which he shall  
wear, with great pleasure in remem-  
brance of the fair giver. -

Saturday July 11<sup>th</sup>.

1778.

The Gen<sup>l</sup>. was not honored with the  
receipt of Miss Watkins's favor till  
yesterday afternoon. which with ap-  
ology for his delay is the acknowledgment.

thought of herself in aiding her daughter in the cares and labors of her family. Her sense of justice and truthfulness was very keen, and she could tolerate no violation of them. Her maxims were derived from the wisdom of the ancients, and her illustrations from the examples of the fathers, while "modern instances" held but a small place in her esteem. Her recollections of famous characters whom she had met were abundant, and her memory was stored with anecdotes of their sayings and doings which made her conversation alike instructive and entertaining.

Her manners were very dignified and decidedly of the "old school," which permitted no unseemly familiarities. In reply to the question, how old she was? put by a discourteous visitor, she said, holding up the member, "Just as old as my little finger." She cherished with great reverence, and committed to me the following correspondence:

"To Genl. WASHINGTON,

"Camp at Morristown.

"Miss Watkins' compliments to Genl. Washington, hopes he will excuse the liberty she has taken in arresting one moment of his attention by presenting him with a Laurel Wreath\* of her own cutting, a faint emblem of those which the General has so lately reaped on the Plains of Monmouth.

"Miss Watkins presents her best Compliments to Mrs. Washington.

"PARAMOUS, June 28, 1778."

The reply of the Commander-in-chief is opposite.

As we developed from infancy to childhood we were regularly graduated from the nursery to "grandma's room," to give place to the new-comers; where each morning opened with a refection of gingerbread

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\* The "Laurel Wreath" was a watch paper surrounded with a laurel wreath, worn in the outside case of old-fashioned watches used then.



to prepare us for the day's work. The affection between her sister Lydia Beekman and herself was very strong, and they never passed a year without visiting each other. In 1827, I remember, Uncle and Aunt Beekman took the journey to Niagara in their coach-and-four, with "Phil" upon the box, in great style; and on their way back stopped to visit her and the family in Albany.

Grandmother Dunkin was a good correspondent, and kept the absent members of the family fully informed of all important matters occurring at home. Her chirography was distinct and antique, her style that of the Spectator, and her letters marked by affection and thoughtfulness, simplicity and shrewdness, and filled with quaint expressions. If I make copious extracts from them it is that our successors may have a clearer idea of the inner life in which we grew up. The two first were written to me at college.

"Sept. 21, 1835. I thank you for your two acceptable letters, and feel very glad you are suited in a room Companion, which I considered a matter of great importance when you left home, because in some measure your present and future standing in life depends greatly on associates of good principles and good morality, without which all the learning in the world is but secondary. \* \* \* Your Mother sent Elizabeth out to purchase the callico for your comforter and get it quilted, and we are all much pleased with her choice. So that you owe her a good will, for she did the best she could."

"June 25, 1837. Your Father arrived safe here early this morning, and brought us the pleasing information that you would be up in a few days: your room and bed is all ready for you, and I think you will be pleased with home, for I have had the lower halls painted, which together with other things, makes the house look well, as it ought to do, you

will say. I am recovering my health and rode to Church the day before yesterday, the weather being fine. Saml. went for the carriage ; he is a surprising fine boy, and as intelligent as a man."

"Open rebuke is better than secret love" was one of Solomon's proverbs followed by her on all occasions, and the following, though written hastily and on imperfect information, is a good illustration of it ; while the interest for her grandson's character and reputation and its quaint language make it too good to be lost. I had been to New York to get some textbooks for our junior class ; gone to a hotel where I thought I would meet my father, but did not, entered my name on the register, taken breakfast, paid for it and departed ; out of which came the following :

"May 8, 1837. The Gentleman who keeps the York House in N. York has called upon your Father, and presented him a bill for you of a Dolr. and a half, which he said you had never paid. The dollr. was for the room you engaged, which is the price by the day, used or not after engaging ; and a half a dolr. for your breakfast.

"Unless it is a man of great consequence, such as the Governor, who must have a place for his papers and to see people on business in, no one says anything about a private room, which is included in the board at every public house.

"I am very much mortified (and so is your Mother) that a Grandson of mine should go to a Hotel, leave the City, and not pay for his fare ; and flatter myself there is some mistake and you have paid the wrong person, and wish it may be so. Otherways you are not fit to travel, and especially as you had money of me, and hope you will never undertake such a commission again without having money in hand from your employers to bear your expenses. Explain this as soon as possible."

The feelings of the chief victim of this small blackmailing were expressed five days afterwards as follows :

"If on any occasion you find a Connecticut man at the bar of a hotel, look out in future for *trap*; for my experience has taught me that a Biped of that species requires close watching, for he is sure to turn everything, especially a small one, to the best account, and is generally on the lookout to better himself by taking every advantage. J. S. VR."

Her cousin, the venerable relict of Bishop Benjamin Moore, had died at an advanced age at her home in Chelsea. She had a countenance of angelic sweetness in her old age, which is faithfully preserved in a portrait in the possession of her grandson, Benjamin Moore, Esq., of Sing Sing, just, alas! deceased. (See Notitia H.)

"Decr. 11th, 1838. Your two last letters one 5th and the other 8th instant I sincerely thank you for, and consider it a great mark of your affection in giving me the particulars of the death and funeral of my dear Cousin, who has been to me from the early stages of life until the final close of it like an elder sister. She has been a most exemplary character through her whole course of life, which seemed entirely devoted to Piety and good acts; and to her, death must have been desirable, and I am much gratified its approach was without much anguish.

"Always remember me most affectionately to Cousin Bradhurst and all the family. And be on your guard against the morning and evening dews, which is apt to bring on a hoarseness, then a cough, which ends in Consumption, which N. Y. is remarkable for from being so much surrounded by water.

"Your Mother is well and with all the children unite in love to you. Catharine is as lovely as ever, and Louisa grows a fine child and like her. Your Grand Papa is well, and for a long time in the fall when the fine weather lasted was bent upon making you a visit. He is very proud of you, as well as

"Your Affectionate Grand Mother,  
"ELIZABETH DUNKIN."

"Feby. 1st, 1839. I am pretty well, but very careful of myself and only go down stairs to dinner when the house is warm, so that your poor mother has a double duty; but she

has been uncommonly well this winter, notwithstanding the severe cold.

“Mr. Vermilye’s great powers of Eloquence and sympathy has shown forth on the occasion of the Patroon’s death, which occurred very suddenly last Saturday. He was at the table at dinner, and said to his family, ‘I can’t swallow,’ which were the last words he ever spoke. He was removed to his room and died without a struggle. The next day being Sunday, Doctr. Vermilye in announcing the painful event to the Congregation was solemn, Eloquent and impressive, and was thought by all to say more in about a dozen lines than another would in a sermon. But to-morrow the funeral sermon is to come, which no doubt will be great in displaying the virtues of so good and distinguished a character. The Patroon’s body was taken to the Church, and after a short exhortation and Psalm the procession formed, which your Father thinks consisted of one thousand People. Many no doubt have been benefitted by him in some way or other. There were no scarfs or any ostentation, not even carriages. An invitation was given for the followers to call at the Manor House and take refreshments, but few went.

“The Children are all well. Saml. reads the Bible every evening with a prayer which he shuts his eyes when saying. Catharine and Louisa are as lovely as they can be; the latter understands every thing and walks a few steps alone.”

“Monday. Mr. Vermilye shone out last evening with all his great powers in a funeral sermon for the Patroon. He took his text from Genesis, where Jacob after providing for his family in the promised land, and settling all his worldly affairs, says, ‘And now I wait Thy Salvation, O my GOD.’ After describing the Character of a good man, he then made the application, and twice mentioned the name of Stephen Van Rensselaer as the one. I hope the sermon will be in print, for then I will get one. Your Father, Margaretta and Lydia were there, but the Church, large as it is, was full to overflowing; but with great difficulty they pushed on, and got seats by crowding on a bench. I thought you would like to hear what is going on here respecting the death of this distinguished man, who is a public loss as well as a private one.”

She always retained a great affection for the old family servants, and never visited New York without

going to see the survivors of them. I had written her the remarks of the Rev. James Richmond in St. Mary's Church, Manhattanville, commending Jenny to the imitation of the congregation because she had taught her great-grandson the whole catechism before he could read, so that he said it perfectly.

"May 10th, 1839. Your letter of the 6th instant was a cordial to me. I have read it over and over again, because in doing so I am reminded of most of the years of my life, and that I have a Grand Son of so much feeling as to regard merit even in a humble garb. Jenny was born in my Father's house about the time my Sister Beekman was, and was our playmate, and when my Father, agreeable to the English mode, hired a teacher in the house to instruct us, she was instructed with us; which laid the foundation for her after respectability. She was for more than fifty years the main stay of the family *in every way*, and may almost be said to be a Revolutionary Character; for from Gen. Washington down to all the Great Officers in the American Army whom she has waited upon, she was noticed more than in a common way by a shake of the hand, and, 'How are you, Jenny?' She was also a great enthusiast in the cause of Liberty. I think very much of Mr. Richmond for his kind attention to her; and so did she, for I never saw her without her praising Mr. and Mrs. Richmond; and concluded Mrs. Hamilton must have mentioned her to them; for before the church was built at Manhattanvill she used to walk to the one at Bloomingdale, when Mrs. Hamilton would take her up and let her sit by the side of her driver. She felt a secret pride in always being noticed by the first people; but always knew her duty and her place."

"May 20th, 1839. You are always on my mind, but you are in the hands of the Almighty, and He will take care of you, through time and Eternity, I am sure."

"March 18th, 1840. Your uncle Doctr. Watkins arrived here yesterday and leaves us to day. I asked him if he would let me have for you Two large Histories of the Bible with comments by Stackhouse, which I knew were of no use to him. He said you should have them, and they were at Harlem. Genl. Maunsell sent to England for them, and read them every night with our dear Aunt in their room."



“Octr. 6th, 1840. Your letter has just come to hand and reminds me of the old saying, that if a man will not attend to his own business he will not have much to attend to long. I have so often spoken to your Father and you on the subject of attending to the payment of the tax on your lot, knowing what a man Tone was ; and he has always said, ‘It is paid, and Maunsell is on the spot and ought to go to the office and satisfy himself as to the certainty of it.’”

“Decr. 31st, 1840. Altho’ my day for writing is passing over, still I cannot resist the pleasure of wishing you a happy New Year. With respect to happiness in this house, it is gone forever, now the charm of it is removed to the realms of bliss. This season of the year, with the exception of the last, has been the most agreeable of any, but now is the reverse. There is a constant weight on my spirits which I think never will be removed while I mourn as I do for my dear departed one. We think of you constantly and wish you here. Louisa, who begins to talk every thing, often speaks of brother Maunsell’s coming to see her in the steamboat, and then looks out of the window.

“You wished your Grand Father to give you an outline of Historical reading, which he says he has done already ; and I feel inclined to give you *my* ideas upon that subject. First, the History of England, from whom we sprang with our Religion. Second, our own Country. And Third, the History of Rome, because their history is connected with the history of the World whom they were forever at war with. The above studies together with Theology will embrace a life time.”

“April 5th, 1841. Your letter to Ann Eliza was very acceptable, and has been read over and over again. With respect to the creation of the world, it is now a subject introduced in society, and brought forward by Geologists in Lectures, and from what I can learn treated of much as you do ; but being an interesting subject altho’ involved in great mysteries, has become a subject of conversation.”

“Decr. 28th, 1841. I have received a letter from Maunsell Bradhurst dated Decr. 15th, in which he announces the death of his Mother, my dear and much loved cousin. She had ever from my earliest recollection been to me like a kind



Sister, and our love was mutual and fervent. She was not confined to her bed at all, and only three days previous to her departure to her room with a cough. She sat up the evening before until eleven o'clock, then went to bed. But her maid, who slept in her room, hearing a strong breathing about five o'clock, went to her bedside, when she insisted on her returning to bed and not disturbing the family ; which she did ; and rose again about six, when the spirit had flown to its immortal rest, where she was desirous of going, and departed in full confidence of the mercies of God, which she has often told me, with lifted hands, she never could be grateful enough for ; and was fully sensible of all the blessings she had received through a long course of life in her husband, children, and their connections. Naturally of a happy and placid disposition, beloved by everybody, she departed in peace with God and man. I stand now the only female representative of my Grand Parents' house and large family, which the Almighty has singularly prospered."

#### BEAUTIFUL GRANDMAMMA.

Grandmamma sits in her quaint arm-chair ;  
Never was lady more sweet and fair ;  
Her gray locks ripple like silver shells,  
And her own brow its story tells  
Of a gentle life and peaceful even,  
A trust in God and a hope in Heaven.

Little girl Mary sits rocking away  
In her own low seat, like some winsome fay ;  
Two doll babies her kisses share,  
And another one lies by the side of her chair ;  
May is fair as the morning dew,  
Cheeks of roses and ribbons of blue.

" Say, Grandmamma," says the pretty elf,  
" Tell me a story about yourself.  
When you were little, what did you play ?  
Was you good or naughty, the whole long day ?  
Was it hundreds and hundreds of years ago ?  
And what makes your soft hair as white as snow ?

" Did you have a mamma to hug and kiss ?  
And a dolly like this, and this, and this ?  
Did you have a pussy like my little Kate ?  
Did you go to bed when the clock struck eight ?  
Did you have long curls and beads like mine,  
And a new silk apron, with ribbons fine ? "

Grandmamma smiled at the little maid,  
And, laying aside her knitting, she said :  
“Go to my desk, and a red box you'll see ;  
Carefully lift it, and bring it to me.”  
So May put her dollies away, and ran,  
Saying, “I'll be careful as ever I can.”

Then grandmamma opened the box, and lo !  
A beautiful child, with throat like snow,  
Lip just tinted like pink shells rare,  
Eyes of hazel, and golden hair,  
Hand all dimpled, and teeth like pearls,  
Fairest and sweetest of little girls.

“Oh, who is it ?” cried winsome May,  
“How I wish she were here to-day !  
Wouldn't I love her like everything ;  
Say, dear grandmamma, who can she be ?”  
“Darling,” said grandma, “that child was me.”

May looked long at the dimpled grace,  
And then at the saint-like fair old face ;  
“How funny,” she cried, with a smile and a kiss,  
“To have such a dear little grandma as this !  
Still,” she added with smiling zest,  
“I think, dear grandma, I like *you* best.”

So May climbed on the silken knee,  
And grandmamma told her history ;  
What plays she played, what toys she had,  
How at times she was naughty, or good, or sad.  
“But the best thing you did,” said May, “don't you see ?  
Was to grow a beautiful grandma for me.”

It must not be supposed from what has been stated and set forth that there was any weak, easy-going negligence in the manner of our bringing up. The very love which ruled prompted fidelity in discipline, and obedience, truthfulness and honesty were exacted. Disobedience or viciousness enjoyed no indulgence, and we had before our eyes the wholesome fear of the “taws,” an ancient weapon of schoolmasters — a leather strap about two feet long and two inches broad, cut half-way into thongs — famed in Ramsay's line, “Never use the *taws* when a gloom (frown) can do the turn.” It ought to be said that our taws were used as the poet prescribed — as the last resort.

## CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

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THE END.

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On Easter Monday, April 7, 1845, I found the following awaiting me in the post-office, where it had been lying through Easter day, leaving me to perform my duties undismayed by its alarming tidings.

“ALBANY, April 5, 1845.

“Friday Evg. 7½ o'clock.

“MY DEAR SON,

“On Monday last I took Lydia to N. York, leaving your mother quite unwell with a bilious attack under the care of Dr. March. On my return this morning I was met at the door by your aunt Matilda with the intelligence that your mother was alarmingly ill, and at death's door, and so I found her; all this day life has been sustained by gentle stimulants and chicken broth most carefully administered, and I am happy to be able to say she is a degree easier, but so feeble that she can scarcely be heard when she speaks and cannot turn herself in bed, or raise herself without assistance. We hope for the best, but she is in great danger, and the Almighty alone can foresee the result. Mr. Russell has this evening gone for Lydia, and we all think you had better come down with the first practicable conveyance.”

When I reached home that evening, after a day's drive of sixty miles from Whitehall, she could not speak to me, although apparently perfectly conscious, and I never understood the accents of her loved and loving voice again, though she lingered till the next evening, when her sufferings ceased, and she “slept in the LORD.” And we were bereaved beyond all

power of language to express, but with the sweetest recollections to console us; for all the poet Cowper wrote on the portrait of his mother we could say of our mother:

“Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall;  
“Ne’er roughen’d by those cataracts and breaks,  
“That humour interposed too often makes;  
“All this, still legible in memory’s page,  
“And still to be so to my latest age,  
“Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay  
“Such honours to thee as my poor words may.”

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*From an Albany newspaper, April, 1845.*

TO THE MEMORY OF  
MRS. ANN DUNKIN VAN RENSSELAER.

“For on the seal  
“When I saw the solemn Yew,  
“Keener was the pang than steel,  
“’Twas a heart-string snapt in two.”

We met her in life’s early dawn, when earthly scenes are fair;  
While yet the bridal-wreath she wore without a shade of care;  
Maturer years saw youthful hearts surrounding her with love,  
Whose minds she taught to know those truths that lead to realms above.  
No duty was left unfulfilled of daughter, wife or friend;  
The heavenly and the earthly seem’d within her soul to blend;  
Tho’ now departed from our sight, how oft do we recall  
Her kindly and endearing ways of gentleness to all.  
Altho’ the home that knew her once will never know her more,  
Remembrance will her presence keep, and every look restore;  
The welcome smile that gladdened us, the tearful parting hour,  
The heartfelt traits of tenderness — these are affection’s dower.  
The poor have lost a valued friend, on whom they long relied,  
’Twas but to know their misery when she their wants supplied;  
When pain and anguish were their lot, and grief the heart had riven,  
She cheering bro’t the balm of hope, and raised their thro’ts to Heaven.  
Her many charities of life were never done for show,  
But as the talent lent to her, all to the wretched owe.  
Can we forget that such things were, and one so truly loved,  
Who’s every act on Memory’s page some sweet memorial proved?  
Or shall we, with a Stoic pride, restrain the falling tear,  
When He, Whose precepts are our guide, wept o’er a human bier?  
His power is now the same as then, and timely aid will give  
Those who have put their trust in Him; tho’ dead yet shall they live  
To join the friends they mourn on earth in happier realms on high,  
Where sorrow is unfelt, and tears are wiped from every eye.

ANON.

My venerable grandfather followed my mother, after a lingering illness, June 18, in the same year, having just completed his eighty-second year. Gen. Jackson died in the same year, 1845. The following is from the *Albany Argus* :

DEATH OF HON. KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER.

This venerable and much respected citizen expired yesterday, at his residence in State street.

In the early part of the present century, Mr. Van Rensselaer was for many years prominently and honorably connected with public affairs. Few citizens were more actively engaged in political and public duties. He was frequently a representative in the city councils, and for five successive terms, a period of ten years, represented the city and county in congress.

For more than twenty years, he has lived retired from public pursuits; retaining the esteem and respect of his fellow-citizens, and of a large circle of friends and family connexions. He died full of years, having attained the advanced age of 82.

Our master was, indeed, taken from our head that day. He was a man of high character and unblemished reputation, of elevated principles and exemplary life, and a communicant of the Dutch church for many years. Prof. John Nott used to say that he was the most perfect gentleman he ever met. He was very handsome, as the profile likeness at the beginning of this volume, copied from that on pink paper by St. Memin, in my possession, witnesses. As I remember him in advanced years, he bore a striking resemblance to a likeness of Archbishop Sumner, given by the Archbishop to Bishop De Lancey, and by him to his sister, Miss Martha A. De Lancey, at whose house I used to see it whenever I entered the door. He was tall and dignified in his appearance, courtly in his



manners, and entirely unpretending and unobtrusive. He was most punctilious in all matters of etiquette, and quick in noticing any breach of it. Among other good lessons, I learned one from him when he criticised a member of a leading family as "no gentleman," because he cleaned his nails when making a call on him. He was very hospitable, and always expected his kindred and friends when they visited Albany to lodge, or at least to dine with him, in the fashion of the ancients. Every year his children and grandchildren were gathered to a feast, where they came at last to fill up the large dining-room. The recollection of those feasts, and of the viands and delicacies under which the table groaned, is enough to make the mouth water. But more potent yet to start "the liquid fountains of the eyes" is the memory it recalls of all the love and kindness, literally unbounded, outlasting all ingratitude and waywardness, of which they were the outward and visible sign. What a brightness that love and tenderness shed upon our childhood and youth, and what would our present life have been without them? Alas! all are gone whose memory those scenes recall, and nothing remains to us but the recollection of them; with grief that we did not repay them more dutifully, and strive more vigorously to realize their ideals for us.

He was rather taciturn, except when called out by some historical question or reminiscence. His acquaintance with history was so extensive that Solomon Southwick, who was a proficient in it himself, mentioned him in one of his works as the best informed authority on the subject with whom he was acquainted. At his own request he was interred in the family



cemetery at Scotia by the side of my grandmother, in the midst of kindred who had "always been," as he expressed it, "his kind friends through life, and with whom he wished to rest in death."

Our beloved grandmother, Elizabeth Dunkin, was taken from us October 17, 1846, a bereavement which severed our last link with the elder generation.

"ALBANY, Nov. 5th, 1855. Uncle William is very ill, and has been for some time. The family have tried to think he would recover, but now Dr. March and Dr. Hun pronounce the case as hopeless, and do not think he can live but a few days at the longest. Papa, Uncles Richard and Bernard feel very sad. Aunt Matilda thinks he has been ailing for a year or more, but has not said anything about it. Dr. March says he has never in his life seen any one so patient as uncle William. Your affectionate sister,

"M. S. RUSSELL."

He expired four days afterwards, "a devout man and one that feared God" from his youth, and was laid in the Albany Rural Cemetery.

On September 12, 1857, the Central America steamer, of which my brother Charles was first officer under Captain Herndon, was lost off Cape Hatteras, with four hundred souls on board, after saving all the women and children on a passing vessel. The incident caused a profound sensation throughout the whole nation and the world. The terrible catastrophe of the Arctic, September 27, 1854, in which so many, including my wife's only brother, James Beloste Taylor, M. D., her surgeon, perished in mid ocean, chiefly from want of discipline, had so affected him that he declared to my father that in a similar emergency his first care would be to rescue the women and children. We little thought then how soon he would be called

on to fulfill his purpose at the cost of his own life. Of the many articles which appeared in newspapers and periodicals in reference to this event I subjoin a few in *Notitia G.* The following is from the *Albany Evening Journal* :

CHARLES W. VAN RENSSELAER,  
FIRST OFFICER OF THE CENTRAL AMERICA.

I.

He stood upon the wreck,  
By gallant Herndon's side;  
Fear brooded darkly o'er the deck,  
Death stalked upon the tide;  
Around him, strong men wept, or cursed, or prayed;  
But he was one of few  
Among that fated crew,  
Who, to their duty true,  
Felt not afraid.

II.

Whatever man could do,  
He had done, his ship to save;  
His toilsome labors now were through,  
Beneath him yawned his grave;  
There was nothing left for him — but to die —  
Yet, though all hope had fled,  
Unfaltering was his tread  
Nor paled his face with dread,  
Nor dimmed his eye.

III.

What thoughts rose in his breast,  
As he stood and gazed below;  
What holy memories unrepressed,  
We now can never know.  
But that a fervent prayer he there breathed out,  
That Heaven the hearts would cheer,  
And wipe away each tear,  
Of all at home most dear,  
Oh, who can doubt?

IV.

There are many here who mourn  
That they cannot see him more;  
They sadly weep that he is gone,  
That hope for him is o'er;

But midst their bitter tears they yet can boast,  
That no blush of recreant shame  
Can sully his fair fame;  
For he, to guard his name,  
Died at his post.

V.

Though the billows o'er him wave  
And his face is no more seen;  
Yet those whom he has died to save,  
Will keep his memory green.  
Those rescued ones will ever hold most dear  
He, who, midst storm and strife,  
To succor child and wife,  
Gladly laid down his life,  
VAN RENSSELAER!

Five years afterwards, October 19, 1862, our beloved Louisa was taken from us, leaving a babe a fortnight old. She had been married to Charles de Kay Townsend, December 18, 1860. She had been our pet and care, especially since the death of our dear mother, and her sudden and untimely death was a great affliction to us all.

March 19, 1868, we lost our father, three weeks before attaining his seventy-sixth year. It was my great privilege to be able to minister to him, during a sickness in which he suffered much, with unyielding firmness and patience, and to receive his affectionate acknowledgments for it, as his "prop" and "support." The Association of Veterans of 1812, who had made him their General-in-chief, requested the family to allow them to bury him with military honors; but it was the wish of all, including his surviving brothers, that the family custom of private funerals should not be departed from. The following notices appeared in the public prints:

#### DEATH OF JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.

Another of our old citizens, and one in the lineage of our Knickerbocker ancestry, has, in the fullness of time, passed from us. After a brief illness, John S. Van Rensselaer died this morning. To within a very brief period, he had been in the enjoyment of that good health and bodily vigor which had always characterized his life.

Mr. Van Rensselaer was the eldest son of Killian Van Rensselaer. He is the lineal descendant of the brother of the first "Patroon" of Rensselaerwyck, who became the proprietor of the Claverack patent. The deceased thus fully inherited the characteristics of the early Dutch settlers of our city and the country hereabouts, and whose impress still, to some extent, gives tone to our character as a people.

He was born in 1792. He received an education quite fully up to the standard of his day; he graduated at Union College; he studied the law, and for some years pursued its practice. His youthful ardor and patriotism led him to take part in the war of 1812, in which he served in the army under Hampton in the vicinity of Lake Champlain.

Mr. Van Rensselaer held but few public offices, his ambition not leading him in that direction. He has been an alderman of the city, and in that capacity evinced his public spirit, his prudence and wisdom.

He leaves behind him a memory of that solid good sense, that sterling integrity, and warm-hearted nature which so eminently distinguished the stock whence he sprang.

#### DEATH OF GEN. JOHN S. VAN RENSSELAER.

In the death of Gen. John S. Van Rensselaer, Albany loses a citizen who has been conspicuous in its society during a long life time—a representative of one of the old Dutch families that founded our city and State. His father Killian K. Van Rensselaer, represented this county for five successive terms in the House of Representatives. Three of his uncles served in the Revolutionary War. Nicholas Van Rensselaer was an aide to Gen. Schuyler, Phillip was Quartermaster, and Henry K., Colonel.

Gen. John S., just deceased, though a young man, not yet of age, served in the war of 1812, and rendered some valuable services. His identification with this period of our national history made him in later years the representative and champion of the surviving veterans when their claims

for services came before the country. He was Military Secretary and Confidential Aide of Gov. De Witt Clinton during his administration. He was educated to the bar, and was appointed Judge of the County, but he did not closely pursue the profession of the law. For a while he edited the *Advertiser* of this city, an influential paper; and took a prominent part in the political struggles of the day. But he was never led by party attachment to forget his obligations to the country. He was a warm-hearted patriot, and loved the Constitution and Government of his fathers, and dreaded the perils to which they were exposed and allied himself to those who defended them. He was a public spirited citizen, and warmly identified himself with whatever would add to the fame or progress of Albany.

He had in his composition none of phlegm, which is supposed to characterise the people of Holland; but was remarkable for vivacity of expression and manner, and a generous impulsiveness.

His well-stored mind, and his wide communion with men and active participation in events, made his conversation as instructive as agreeable. And he retained to the close of his life the animation, and joyous and gallant spirit of his youth.

Having returned from a three years' absence in Europe in May, 1879, I found my oldest sister, Margaretta, hopelessly ill. She expired June 16th, leaving a sad void in her family and circle of relatives. She had been my earliest playmate and companion, and I cannot remember time which was not associated with her. She had passed over thirty years of an exemplary widowhood, devoting herself to the care and education of her two children, who grew up to reward her affection and labors by an unfaltering love and a ready fulfilment of her desires and aims for their welfare.

My venerable uncle Bernard followed her on the 25th of the same month at the advanced age of seventy-eight years, five months, thirteen days. He was



always the kindest and most affectionate of men, and sincerely devoted to his kindred of all degrees. I am under the greatest obligations to him for a host of services and kindnesses done me in childhood and youth, continued through his whole life, and not ending with his death. He honored my sons, as well as benefited them, by making them his inheritors, and his memory should be reverently cherished by them and their descendants.

#### DEATH OF B. S. VAN RENSSELAER.

Our citizens were startled yesterday afternoon by the announcement of the death of Mr. B. S. Van Rensselaer, which took place between twelve and one o'clock, at his residence, No. 112 State street, where he has lived for a good many years. Mr. Van Rensselaer was a descendant of the old family of that name, and while yet a young man was appointed to a position in the office of the Surveyor-General of the State, and continued to hold the same through the several changes of politics until within a few months of his death, and he, without doubt, served the State a greater number of consecutive years than any person ever in its employ. The title of the office was changed by the Constitution of 1846 from Surveyor-General to that of State Engineer and Surveyor, and Mr. Van Rensselaer continued to hold the position under the most accomplished Engineers who have filled the place, viz.: Charles B. Stewart, H. C. Seymour, W. J. McAlpine, John T. Clark, Silas Seymour, Van R. Richmond, Wm. B. Taylor, J. P. Goodsell, S. H. Sweet, J. D. Van Buren, Jr., and lastly under the present incumbent, Horatio Seymour, Jr.

Mr. Van Rensselaer was known from one end of the State to the other as the well-posted Land Clerk of the office, and many an intricate case in which there was a dispute as to title and location has been worked out by him.

About a year since his health began to fail, and last fall he was obliged to give up office work, and for the past three or four months has been out but little. Yesterday morning early his lower limbs became paralyzed, and in a few hours he expired. He was in the seventy-ninth year of his age.



He has been a widower for many years, and leaves surviving one brother — Richard — who is the President of the Merchants' National Bank. The deceased Mr. Van Rensselaer was known for his many deeds of charity and benevolence, and will be sadly missed by many partakers of his bounty.

*Albany Argus.*

AT A MEETING OF THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND CLERKS OF THE STATE OFFICES, HELD JUNE 27, 1879, AT THE OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED, VIZ. :

The former associates of the late Bernard S. Van Rensselaer in the various departments of the State Government, being assembled together in the State Hall on this 27th day of June, 1879, do unanimously agree upon the following :

*Resolved*, That we have heard with unfeigned sorrow of the death of our old associate and friend, than whom, we believe, a more honorable or kinder hearted man never lived.

*Resolved*, That we point with pride to his long, eminently useful and pre-eminently honorable connection with the office of the Surveyor-General and of the State Engineer and Surveyor, extending as it did over a period of upwards of forty years ; a connection which he maintained under all parties and administrations, which is not marred by a single blemish, and which was severed only by infirmity and death:

*Resolved*, That we who knew him so well, some of us so intimately, bear quick and cheerful testimony to his kindness of heart, his undeviating courtesy of manner, his strict and faithful attention to duty, and to his unswerving honesty of purpose and action.

*Resolved*, That as he goes down to the grave full of years, lamented by all his associates and acquaintances, and at the end of a long and most honorable career, we feel it a privilege no less than a duty to draw public attention to his many virtues, and to publicly express the deep sensibility of the loss which we have sustained in a friend, and the State in an old and faithful servant.

*Resolved*, That as a mark of respect we attend the funeral in a body.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded

to the surviving brother of the deceased, and that they be published in the daily newspapers of the city of Albany.

W. G. M. PHELPS,

*Secretary.*

W. MCGOURKEY,

*Chairman.*

And, "to end this strange, eventful history" of two generations, Richard, the only survivor of the brothers, passed peacefully away March 29, 1880, at the good old age of eighty-two years, three months and five days, thus severing the last link which connected us with the elder generation. He was remarkable for great personal beauty, a quiet demeanour, invincible firmness and resolution, unbending integrity, a high sense of justice, large hospitality and kindness, and a strong and enduring attachment to his kindred. I saw more of him and learned more of his excellent character in the last few months of his life than ever before, and it was my privilege to receive from him marks of confidence and affection which it is a great happiness to remember. His death was felt to be a loss to the community in which he had been born and spent all his days.

#### RICHARD VAN RENSSELAER.

The old landmarks of Albany are rapidly passing away. The truth of this statement is given peculiar and added force in the fact that last evening, at his residence, 112 State street, passed away the last of his branch of the Van Rensselaer family in the person of Richard Van Rensselaer. The deceased had been, during all his long life, an honored, upright and public-spirited citizen, and his death, in the maturity and ripeness of old age, gathers to his fathers the oldest and, most singularly, the last surviving member of the family.

Mr. Van Rensselaer proceeded yesterday morning, as usual, to his office with his servant, but he had no sooner taken off his overcoat and shoes than he complained of a sharp and severe pain across the chest, and was obliged to

lie down. Dr. Ward was immediately summoned, and directed that he should be taken to his home, which was at once done. He grew rapidly worse, but remained perfectly conscious and rational until a few minutes before his death, which occurred just before nine o'clock last evening. The immediate cause of his death is not definitely known, but it is supposed to have been from an affection of the heart.

Richard Van Rensselaer was born in this city in State street near the Old Elm Tree corner, December 24, 1797, and was therefore in the eighty-third year of his age. His father was Killian K. Van Rensselaer, who, it is a notable fact, was the first Representative in the Congress of the United States from this district; and his mother was Margaretta Sanders, great-granddaughter of Robert Sanders, famous in the annals of this city for his knowledge of the Indian languages and his influence over the Five Nations. He graduated at Union College in 1816, in company with his brother William, was admitted to the bar, and made a Master in Chancery by Chancellor Kent. His disposition was always retiring, and his manners plain and unobtrusive. He never sought nor would accept public or political place, but was content to spend his long and honorable life in a private station, and to the very last he set an example of industry in his business and fidelity in every trust committed to him.

It is a fact worthy of note that his death follows so close upon that of another of Albany's oldest and most respected citizens, Mr. Thos. W. Olcott, whose funeral on Wednesday last Mr. Van Rensselaer was quite desirous to attend. By reason of the inclement weather and advice of his friends, he was obliged to forego the solemn duty. Mr. Van Rensselaer was, at the time of his death, President of the Merchants' National Bank of this city, and a director in the Albany & Schenectady Turnpike Company and of the Albany Gas-light Company.

*Albany Argus, March 30, 1880.*





*Mr. Van Renspelaer.*



## REMINISCENCES OF BOYHOOD.

### “SCOTIA.”

Scotia was the home of my great-uncle, Judge John Sanders, who maintained the reputation for unbounded hospitality which it had enjoyed ever since its settlement by his maternal great-great-grandfather, Alexander Lenderse Glen, in 1661. (*Vide* Weise's History of Albany and Notitia to this paper.) It is on the left bank of the Mohawk river about three-quarters of a mile above Schenectady. The existing mansion bears on its front “1713” in antique figures, its predecessor having been carried away by the encroachments of the river, which has often threatened to undermine the present one. It had escaped destruction by the French in their sack of Schenectady in 1692, in consequence of the kindness of my grandmother's great-grandfather and his brother in saving a French priest whom the Mohawk Indians were going to torture to death, as I have narrated in a paper printed in the publications of the New York Historical Society for 1846. My frequent visits there from my earliest childhood mingled the charm of romance with present pleasures, of which I never grew weary. My uncle had a large family, and almost all of his children were about him or near him. His grandchildren were mostly of my own age, and they all shared in the hospitable feelings of their head. The house was always full, and there was plenty of good



cheer. In the winter we had sleighing and coasting, and home-made sausages and headcheeses and buck-wheat cakes, with oileykoecks and crullas, and the great open fireplace filled with logs, and no fear of frost. In the summer we had all the enjoyments of country life without stint. My uncle had much land which he cultivated, and, like Boaz, he went out into the fields among his reapers, and did not disclaim to handle the pitchfork and the rake in haying and harvest times. There had always been a large retinue of black servants, some of whom remained to my time, and they were not among the least interesting peculiarities of Scotia. They used the Dutch language, and were as saucy as privileged negroes are wont to be. The sable cooks especially were absolute in the kitchen, and "Clar out dar now, or I'll gib yer de broomstick!" was often a welcome for us youngsters when we intruded into their domain when they were getting dinner ready. At other times they were full of affection and kindness, and made us happy with nuts, cakes and apples, and other enemies to health and sound sleep, and entertained us with ghost stories and the music "ob de fiddle," in which particular instrument some one of them was sure to be accomplished for the benefit of the dancers, white as well as black. They had their superstitions, of course, and a venerable coachman, Pietje by name, was firmly believed to have the gift of second sight; a belief which was not confined to his sable companions, since remarkable traditions of his predictions were long preserved in the family. Their loyalty and fidelity to their masters was unimpeachable and unassailable, of which my uncle had an amusing instance to nar-

rate in connection with the same Pietje. A neighbor, evidently taking for granted that a negro could not be more honest than himself, offered Pietje a dollar if he would bring him one of his master's sheep dressed for a feast which he was preparing in connection with a "husking bee." Pietje agreed, and at the appointed time carried the meat to him, which was that of one of his own sheep which Pietje had taken from his own flock, and carried away the dollar. When he discovered the trick and saw how he had outwitted himself he took Pietje to task for stealing his sheep; to which the old darkey, with his ready wit, replied: "O! it's all de same ting, sah, it's all de same ting;" it was white man thief calling black man thief. And then he added, "Did he tink he could make me steal from my master?"

My uncle was emphatically a "gentleman of the old school," "modern degeneracy had not reached him." In his dress he adhered to the customs of the last century, and never abandoned small clothes, silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles. He was grave and dignified in his manners, and expected the respect due to elders from the young. After one of my visits at his house, when not very large, he told my father, to my great confusion, that I "laughed too loudly," which was undoubtedly disrespectful in his view, although entirely unintentional, for it was impossible not to respect so upright and dignified a man. I do not remember, however, to have entertained any dread in his presence, and it must have been from the kindness and friendliness which were habitual with him towards his kindred. He was noted for his courage and resolution, of which

he had given proof on notable occasions. There was a tradition that a bear, forced by hunger in a severe winter, had raided upon his domain and been slain by him in "the camp," which was handed down in popular legend as the spot where the French encamped before their attack on Schenectady. Before the canals were made through the State, goods were carried to and from the west either in "batteaux" on the Mohawk that flows by Scotia, or in huge covered wagons or sleighs along the turnpikes, one of which passed through his estate. During the season of navigation the river was alive with the passing batteaux, illumined at night with hundreds of lights, and lively with the music of bugles and the songs and cries of the boatmen poling their boats against the stream. In the winter long trains of baggage wagons or sleighs filled the roads, and, especially when snow covered the ground, made passing difficult. The teamsters were a notoriously hard lot, made bolder by the numbers in which they pursued their journeys. On a winter's day he was driving home alone in his sleigh, when he met a train which completely filled the single track in the snow, and compelled him to draw aside to let them pass. Sleigh after sleigh passed him quietly enough till at last a ruffian driver, as he passed, lifted his long whip and gave Judge Sanders a severe cut across the shoulders. He said nothing, but when the last had gone by he turned his horse into the track and followed them, knowing that they would stop at the first tavern beyond. When they had all assembled in the bar-room he appeared among them, horsewhip in hand, and said, "I am John Sanders, and a magistrate.

One of you has committed a brutal and cowardly assault on a peaceable traveller on the highway. If he is not given up I shall commit all of you." They knew him well enough to know that he would be as good as his word, and that he was a dangerous party to trifle with. So after a little deliberation the aggressor presented himself and confessed his offence. My uncle, feeling that the dignity and authority of his office, as well as the safety of his person, had been outraged, gave him the choice of instant arrest and commitment or summary punishment then and there. He chose the latter, and submitted with the best grace he could to a severe castigation which the judge inflicted on him in person, thus saving the cost of imprisonment, trial and fine, and securing immunity for himself and all travellers in his bailiwick, from that time forth, from rash or drunken teamsters.

My recollection carries me back to the time when the family at Scotia consisted of my uncle and aunt (his second wife), his widowed daughter, Mrs. Anderson, "Cousin Betsy," whose scape-grace of a husband had died at sea and she could never be convinced that he would not reappear, which was the last thing that her kindred wished for; "Cousin Jacob," "Cousin Robert," "Cousin Peter," "Cousin Theodore." "Cousin Barent," the eldest, lived near by with his family; and "Cousin John" lived on the "Sanders Patent" on the upper waters of the Hudson, but afterwards married Jane Livingston and went to live at Clermont, Columbia county. All had something to do; Mrs. Anderson looking after the domestic affairs, and the stalwart sons finding plenty to occupy them in the care of "the flats," or the mill,

or the outlying farms. After the change from slave to free labor the difficulty in getting along with laborers had led my uncle to attempt an heroic remedy by procuring through our Consul agricultural people from England. The experiment was eminently successful, and relieved him from all anxiety, three or four respectable families having been brought over by him and settled on the place; their children taking their places, and becoming useful and reputable citizens. They represented the best class of English farm hands, and I never heard of one of them becoming discontented or giving trouble. Besides the home circle there was "Cousin Sally," Mrs. Peter S. Van Rensselaer, mentioned before, and "Cousin Caty," Mrs. Gerard Beekman, who lived in New York. These all were wont to make an annual pilgrimage to the family nest, and in my childhood they would often meet there at the same time, and we among them. As long as my grandmother was able to endure the fatigue she and my grandfather took advantage of the earliest sleighing to order the family sleigh to be put in order, provided with buffalo robes and the indispensable footstove, and with my grandmother protected against the cold by the furs of finest texture presented to her mother by Sir William Johnson, drive over across the sand plains, cross the Mohawk on the ice, and settle down for a good quiet visit with the kindred, who were never more happy than when welcoming them. O how I have wished, when seeing the comfortable old sleigh start off with its precious freight, that I was going with them! I know how those visits were prized on both sides, and how they served to bind each together "in the bundle of life."



Every year Mr. and Mrs. Beekman spent a part of the summer with her father, bringing with them their only son, James William, and it was our meetings there that produced the affectionate intimacy which made him my dearest friend. He was between two and three years older than I, but my first recollection of him is that of a sickly and delicate child, anxiously watched over by his mother, whom no one expected to live long. A heartless relative once told his mother so, and she only replied, "But he *may* live," and persevered till her love and faith were rewarded by his growing up a healthy and active youth. I recall with shame a mean feeling of superiority over my sickly cousin inspired by my own robust health, but, thank God, I outgrew it, to find him one of the most charming of companions and truest of friends. The intercourse between the families was close and frequent, as we were connected on both sides, his uncle James having married my mother's aunt. As a boy and playmate, he was full of humor and good nature, ready for a frolic and appreciating a good joke, especially if played off on his worthy uncles and aunts, the former, sooth to say, being quite ready to repay in kind, and rather difficult to find napping, always excepting "Pappy Piet." Pleasant were the rambles we were wont to take along the banks of "the lake," through the woods, and to "East Scotia," the home of his bachelor uncles after their father's death. He brought from New York a "stub and twist" fowling piece, which was my envy; and he had a book of flies, and we essayed the babbling brooks for trout, but the trout were remarkably indifferent to our approaches and gave us no encouragement to speak of.



In the style of my grandfather's Harvard correspondent, H. G. Otis, we could say :

“ Libet jacere, modo sub antiqua ilice,  
Modo in tenaci gramine.  
Labuntur altis interim ripis aquae,  
Queruntur in silvis aves,  
Fontesque lymphis obstrepunt manantibus,  
Somnos quod invitet leves.” *Hor. Epod. ii.*

“ Free to recline, now under aged ilex,  
Now in frank sunshine on the matted grass,  
While thro' the steep banks slip the gliding waters,  
And birds are plaintive in the forest glens,  
And limpid fountains, with a drowsy tinkle,  
Invite the light wings of the noonday sleep.”  
*Lord Lytton.*

Our re-unions at “the old Hive,” as he called it, continued up to my graduation in 1838, when I entered the Seminary at New York. Then he went abroad for a year, and not long after his return was married. But our correspondence was never given up, lasting up to within a short time of his ever-to-be-lamented death — forty-three years. If intermitted at times it was only to be revived with increased earnestness. His letters which I have preserved give an exact idea of his rare character. They abound in wit and humor, of which he had a great store, in good advice, in thoughtful observations about men and events, and in enduring affection. He had a fine intellect, which had been carefully cultivated, keen observation, a sound judgment, and great practical wisdom. His opinion on any subject was sure to be valuable, and his counsel sound, because he took pains in informing himself. This has been signally illustrated in the history of the affairs of Union College, which is indebted to his fidelity and courage for whatever endowment has been preserved to it. He had a taste for natural science and mechanics,

and the invention of an electrical motor was one of our divertisements at "East Scotia," of which two large copper disks are the surviving mementoes. He had a good literary taste, and read the old authors with unabated pleasure. But all this was nothing in comparison with his exalted idea of right and truth, his high principle, his stern integrity, and the sacredness of his word. Reverence for sacred things seemed an instinct in him, and religion was always, even in his gayest moments, a most serious thing. He was humble, devout, child-like, cheerful in his religious character, making God the beginning and the end of all things, referring all things to Him, receiving every event as from Him, and full of gratitude for His mercies, and submission to His chastisements. There was a peculiar tenderness in his prayers to the "Dear Father," and he abounded in charity and in tenderness and love for souls, which was a perpetual incentive to those who knew him well. The Holy Scriptures were his especial delight; they were the guide by which he fashioned his life, the counsel that instructed him, and the comforter that consoled him; and he read them constantly, reverently and devoutly. I might fill pages with specimens of wit and wisdom from his letters; but the extract below will serve to show his inmost heart under a most trying ordeal, and reveal his affection, his courage and his faith.

"NEW YORK, November 21, 1853.

"MY DEAR MAUNSELL:

"How naturally do we think of old tried friends in times of trouble! I know not why, but my heart has been thinking of you all day, and I must let you know by paper of the dire calamity which has been impending over me for a fortnight past.

“My dear wife was suddenly attacked on Sunday morning, 6th Nov., with a terrible malady, so violent that within two hours she was brought to the verge of the grave. And now, after 15 days, she still lingers in bed, with three physicians attending twice a day, and oscillating between life and death. From the fact that she had been twice at the Quarantine dock, Staten Island, on the Thursday previous to her attack, and from the extreme malignancy of it, there is reason to believe that she had the Asiatic Cholera. Certainly it is not easy to conceive anything more frightful than her sickness. After lingering a week, on the next Sunday she relapsed, and the doctor staid with her all that day and that night. About midnight he told me that she could not live more than an hour. I asked whether the shock of telling her would endanger her life. He replied, nothing could make her more ill than she then was. I first told the sad news to her brother William and to her sisters, Mrs. Graham and Mrs. Brett; and then I had the hardest task which man can well be called on to perform—the duty of telling my best beloved that she must soon die. Kneeling by her side, I told her the sad message. Without the least change of countenance or tremor of voice she replied, ‘I thought I was getting well: but God’s will be done! I have not left the preparation for death until now.’ Then she calmly took leave of us all. ‘James,’ said she, ‘promise me that you will no longer give so much of your time to other people, neglecting your own children. Promise me to attend to them first. See that they are well educated; a good education is the only thing they cannot lose. Bring them up in the fear of the Lord.’ She blessed her little ones—too little to comprehend their bereavement—and said, ‘The Lord will take care of my children.’ Then she spoke kindly to each of the servants, and made requests of some of them; then composed herself to die. At her request I read some passages of Scripture and some hymns, and after some time prayed with her. Her voice was calm and unshaken, and her intellect clear as I have ever known it. Indeed she seemed buoyed above not only the fear of death, but all earthly passion. Affection was strong, especially for her brother William; but no tear of sorrow or word of repining fell from her. It is the Lord—He doeth all things well.

“Another week has passed—a week of strife between prayers and medical skill and the disease. She does not

improve as we hoped. A new malady (intermittent fever) showed itself yesterday, and all day she has remained very sick, indeed. Imagine the distress and anxiety we all suffer—our hopes and fears. Whom the LORD loveth he *correcteth*. Pray for me and for us all, my friend and Christian brother—pray that Grace may be given to bear what He may send, and that she may be spared, if possible, to her little children and husband. Whatever may be the issue of this affliction, I trust it may be sanctified to us all.

“I have withdrawn from public business, and declined some honorable advances made toward me by (credat Judæus) Thurlow Weed himself touching the Secretary of Stateship. I wished the opportunity and leisure to prepare a memoir of Dr. Milledoler, but so far there is no leisure for anything so time-taking as literary studies. Man appoints, GOD disappoints, when it is for our good; for we know that must be plain to us hereafter which is obscure and even *impossible* now. How can *thus* or *so* be right? ‘Be still, and know that I am GOD,’ says the *Word*—the Book—and my heart responds, Amen!”

It was our lot to spend the winter of 1878–9 at the Villa Lomellini (Grand Hotel), Pegli, Italy, in company with Dr. Campbell Stewart, the physician of Mrs. Beekman on this occasion, and he confirmed our impressions of the severity of the disease, and the unexpectedness of the recovery. On July 1, 1876, Mr. Beekman came down from Oyster Bay to see us off on the City of Berlin, and bade us farewell with his usual good spirits and kindness. It was the last time I had the privilege of seeing him. On landing at the same pier, the same day and hour, the next year, the first tidings I received were of his lamented death a fortnight before. May he rest in peace, and may perpetual light shine upon him!

“Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit:  
Nulli flebilior quam mihi.”

“James W. Beekman, for many years known for his connection with New York’s public and private charities, died

at his residence, No. 5 East Thirty-fourth street, in the sixty-second year of his age. He was born in this city on the 22d of November, 1815, and with the exception of the time spent in late years at his country seat at Oyster Bay, L. I., and one or possibly two trips to Europe and the Mediterranean shores of Asia and Africa, he has lived here continuously. He was an only child, and a direct descendant of William Beekman, one of the first town officers of New Amsterdam under its first town charter in 1652, when Cornelius Van Tienhoven was chosen the first 'schout.' Another of his ancestors, Gerardus Beekman, governed the colony in 1710, after the recall of Lord Lovelace. He received a good education as became the estate of his family, and won in early life the esteem of all those who came into contact with him. On the demise of his parents he found himself the inheritor of a handsome property as yet but partly developed. Mr. Beekman always took a quiet interest in political affairs, but only once did he hold a political office; this was in his young days, when he was chosen one of the city delegation to the State Senate. For very many years he was one of the most active members of the Governing Board of the New York Hospital, and more recently became one of its vice-presidents. At the same time he was President of the Woman's Hospital and a director of the New York Dispensary and of several other charitable institutions. His time was mainly occupied in attending to the various duties which devolved on him in managing his property, most of which consisted of real estate. He was one of the most cordial and polished and at the same time one of the most retired and unostentatious of men. Mr. Beekman naturally took a great delight in old New York, its families and its history. He was one of the most prominent members of the Historical Society, and also of the St. Nicholas Society, and at the time of his death he was the president of the new club which bears that name. While not exactly what is vaguely known as a 'society' man, he did not live the life of a recluse, but always endeavored to strike the 'golden mean' in this as in other things. He married when quite young. Four children survive him — two sons and two daughters.

"The Executive Committee of the Historical Society held a meeting when it was voted to attend in a body the funeral, which will take place on Tuesday morning from the Reformed Dutch Church, corner of Fifth avenue and Twenty-



ninth street. The St. Nicholas Society and Club will both meet to-morrow at the offices of the Lorillard Insurance Company to take suitable action.

"Mr. Beekman's disease was an aggravated form of pneumonia induced by exposure. It first showed itself some four weeks ago, but the news of his death yesterday was a surprise to all his friends."

#### "CHERRY HILL."

"Cherry Hill" has passed out of the possession of its hereditary owners, and begs a kind word of grateful remembrance from me. It used to be a pleasant place to visit in the old days, and I recall many a happy hour spent there, especially when the cherries were ripe, and we could have all that we wanted. It was built by my uncle Philip in 1768, the year of his marriage with Maria, daughter of Robert Sanders, who was my grandmother Van Rensselaer's uncle. In my possession is an ancient leaf from a memorandum book, on which is inscribed in faded ink the following record of the marriage, apparently in the handwriting of a clerk of my great-grandfather Van Rensselaer:

"PHILIP VAN RENSSELAER — MARIA SANDERS, JUNE 14,  
1768."

"The rose is red, the violet blue;  
Crownation's sweet, and so are you."

He had an extensive correspondence, and the following, endorsed by him, "March 20, 1765. A letter not signed, but supposed to be off Mr. Richard Yates," gives a curious picture of the period just before the Revolution.



“NEW YORK, March 20, 1775.

“MR. PHILIP VAN RENSSELAER,

“DR SIR,

“There are many people in this City who sell tea, Clandestinely, altho’ it is recommended by the late Congress that none should be made use of—which is not much attended to. The people who have tea in this city intend to Petition the next Congress for Liberty to sell what they have on hand, so that when you receive this, you will be pleased not to sell any that you have of mine, under 4s. for cash or 4s.6d. for barter.

“I am, Dr Sir,

“Your Friend &c.”

“N.B.—Be pleased to keep the above as secret as possible.

With his father and two brothers he joined the Continental army, and was appointed to the important and responsible post of Military Storekeeper at Albany. The following are from the correspondence connected with his duties:

“ALBANY, 17 July, 1776.

“SIR:

“Inclosed you have a letter for Major-General Gates which you will be pleased to forward to him, as also all the stores which you will receive from me, to Ticonderoga. The bearer will deliver you two Hhds of Cartridge paper and 2 Tierces of Shoes, one containing 125 prs, and the other containing 140 prs, for which you will be pleased to send me a receipt. The shoes must be sent to Benjamin Egberts, Storekeeper at Ticonderoga.

“I am, Sir, your

“Most Humble Servt,

“P. V. RENSSELAER.

“*To the Commanding Officer at Fort George.*”

“TYCONDEROGA, NOV. 21, 1776.

“DR. SR.

“I do enclose you a Letter for Colo Dayton which you will be pleased to deliver to Colo Dayton. Be pleased to press Watson for my Clothes, and send ’em to me, by the hands of Mr. Egberts at Fort George.

"I suppose you have heard of Colo White's attempt to murder me. He is too much of the Dastardly Poltroon to challenge a Gentleman. I shall pursue him as a cat would a Mouse, till he is dismissed the Army with Infamy.

"My Compliments to all.

"I am yours very sincerely,

"RICHD. VARICK.

"MR. PH. V. RENSSELAER."

The following shows how the distinguished writer was equipping himself for the approaching campaign against Burgoyne:

"ALBANY, March 10, 1777.

"DEAR SIR:

"I am informed that you incline to part with one of your Negroes. If so, I should be glad to have the refusal of him. Please to send out a Saddle that is come from Boston for me.\*

"I am, Dr. Sir, Yours sincerely,

"PH. SCHUYLER.

"PHILIP V. RENSSELAER."

Extract from a letter from Doctor Francis Fagan, Senior Surgeon, to Doctor Potts, Director-General of the Northern Department, dated "Bennington, 18 Augt, 1777."

"The following is the truest acct I can collect of the Action of the 16th. Our people discovered that 1,500 of the Enemy were posted within 6 miles of this Place. The Militia immediately assembled, rushed on with the greatest intrepidity, drove them, and took the following prisoners, vizt. — 1 Col., 1 Maj., 5 Capts., 12 Lieuts., 4 Ensgs., 2 Cornets, 1 Judge Advocate, 1 Baron, 2 Canadian Officers, 3 Surgeons, 32 Offs comm'd, 37 Brit. rank and file, 398 Hessians, 38 Canadians, 151 Tories, 80 wounded; Total, 736. 4lb. Brass Cannon. 200 killed, from the best accts. Our number of wounded is about 50, and 31 killed. Our numbers were about 2,000, and only abt half engaged, to the immortal Honor of old Yankoo. I saw the Prisoners and Cannon with both my Eyes."

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\*The "Saddle" was sent, and a receipt therefor duly returned, but even the diligence of Mrs. Bonney has not been able to discover anything about the "Negro."

Good luck, and not his own skill, with the patriotic and magnanimous aid of Gen. Schuyler, had made Gates the captor of Burgoyne and his army. This makes the following letter, written nearly a year after his triumph, interesting.

“CAMP AT BEDFORD, 14th Sept. 1778.

“DEAR SIR,

“I thank you for your obliging letter by Quin, and for the locks, &c., which were in much request, as I had no secure place for the public papers, not a lock being to be had for Love or Money. I have in the strongest manner recommended the Armory at Albany to the protection and encouragement of His Excellency General Washington; and I am confident he will upon your application comply with every reasonable request. Your letter to the General, and that to the Board of War, with the Return, were immediately forwarded to Head-Quarters. I have desired that more of the unrepai red arms now at Fishkill may be sent to your Armory, as there they will be made serviceable; if you want a recruit of Armorers, I advise you to apply immediately to General Washington, who will, upon your pointing out the means of obtaining them, give directions accordingly. The News here is that the Enemy are preparing to evacuate New York, and some apprehend they will fall in a Body upon the Eastern States; but I think the season of the year too far advanced for such an Enterprize; upon the whole I am full of Opinion They are preparing to Quit the Continent; a very little Time (a fortnight perhaps) will decide the matter. Mrs. Gates joins me in Affectionate Compliments to You, Mrs. Rensselaer and your Fireside, being with much Esteem,

“Dear Sir,

“Your affectionate humble Servant

“HORATIO GATES.

“P. S.—You had better apply to General Washington for his letter to Govr. Clinton to have Mr. Shepperd Exempted from Militia Duty. I think it unreasonable it should be required of him.

“(PHILIP RENSSELAER, ESQ.)”

Peace and Independence came at last, after eight years' contest and suffering, and the two following letters are interesting as showing the different effects it produced on opponents who were agreed in respecting and confiding in their correspondent.

FROM COLONEL VARICK.

"POUGHKEEPSIE, April 10th, 1783.

"It gives me infinite Pleasure, my Dear Sir, to congratulate you on the Confirmation of a General Peace and the establishment of our INDEPENDENCE upon the most firm footing. The news arrived by Packet at New York, and Sir Guy wrote to the General that he would issue his Proclamation declaring it to all the King's Subjects as of Tuesday the 8th instant. So that the Exiles of our State will once more return to their adored City, altho' not under such pleasing Circumstances as they would wish. As for my own Part I had become so involved in public and private Concerns as almost to forget that my feelings would so sensibly apprise me of my attachment to any particular spot, till touched by the pleasing Information.

"Make my respects to Mrs. Rensselaer and congratulate her most heartily for me on an event that will allay her Apprehensions for her Person, family and property from the merciless Savages, who are perfectly in our power.

"Remember me also to the dear Girls, for one of whom I beg Leave to trouble you with a Letter in answer to a friendly favor, and a debt for a great obligation conferred.

"I shall try to be absent some days to attend the first week of April Term, and set out for Albany on Monday the 14th, provided nothing interferes from Head-Quarters, where I mean to make my appearance on Saturday the 12th.

"With Esteem and Attachment I remain,

"Dear Sir,

"Your friend and Obedient Servant,

"RICHARD VARICK.

"PHIL. VAN RENSSELAER, ESQR."

FROM STEPHEN DE LANCEY.

"NEW YORK, June 28, 1783.

"DEAR SIR

"As I intend for Canada it will be necessary for me to

impower some person here to sell my lands and settle my affairs in your neighborhood. If agreeable to you I must beg the favour of you to act for me and lett me know immediately on what terms. Could you come down yourself it would be most agreeable. I have received some things from Albany by Mr. Van Schaack, who I am informed is in your employ. He has been very unjust in his demand for freight my brother John has pd. him 15 pounds 14s. and 8d., which is full one half of what the things would fetch here. If you agree with me in this you will be pleased to speak to Mr. Van Schaack, and make me restitution. This I submit entirely to your determination and shall be satisfied with it.

"Lett me hear from you soon. From, Dr. Sir, your sinseer friend and Hble Sert.,

"STEPN. DE LANCEY.\*

"PH. VAN RENSSELAER."

With the young Patroon, Uncle Philip had always maintained pleasant and friendly relations, as the following from the lord of the Manor evinces:

"DEAR SIR

"I am sorry that I was not at home when you last called. The sloop of Messrs. Robison & Hale is returned and I have not yet received the ballance due; as soon as I receive it shall well give you notice.

"I am Dr. Sir

"Your Hble Servt,

"STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER.

"WATERVLIET, July 11, 1786."

But a difference arose between them from the delay made by the Patroon to execute certain papers as he had stipulated, and the old soldier, feeling that he

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\* Stephen De Lancey was Lieutenant-Colonel of the 1st Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers (Royalist). It does not appear why he accepted a commission in a New Jersey regiment, but he was commissioned as such September 5, 1776, while he was a prisoner. On the evening of June 4, 1776, he was celebrating the birthday of George III, and being loud in his expressions of loyalty, he and his party were arrested by the patriotic citizens of Albany, and given into the safe-keeping of Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, who seems to have taken charge during the war of such Tories. After his release he was again commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel of the 1st Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers, December 25, 1781, and so continued to the close of the war. After peace was declared he removed to Nova Scotia. [*Adjutant-General William S. Stryker's "The New Jersey Volunteers (Loyalists) in the Revolutionary War."*]



was treated with neglect, felt himself bound to make him understand that he could not be trifled with, even by the lord of the Manor. Stephen Van Rensselaer was young. He had graduated at Harvard in 1782, at the age of eighteen. The next year he was married, as I have told before, to Margaret Schuyler, but it was two years after that before he attained his majority, and entered on his patrimony. His estate had been in charge of his guardians since his father's early death in 1769, and as he was not particularly apt at business, the misunderstanding between him and my uncle Philip referred to drew out the following remonstrance, which is interesting as illustrating the sturdy spirit of independence in the writer, combined with the deference due to the lord of the Manor, which was a strong feeling among the Dutch even in my time. It is also interesting as bringing into light the peculiar feudal privileges enjoyed by the Patroon up to the present generation.

“SIR:

“It is with Great Reluctance that I am under the necessity to give you any more Trouble on this Subject. I have not had an answer of you to Either of my two Last Letters, which you and your Lady did promise to send me. I am at a Loss to know for what Reason I am treated with so much Contempt. You would not pay me any Compliment if you was to consider me in every Respect as your Equal, fortune and Title only excepted. If I know myself I wish not to have anything of you out of Reason. I have bought and paid for my place; I have a just claim for my Lands, of your Ancestors, without any Exceptions but the Tenth according to the Custom of the Manor; by your Order my claim was surveyed; by your Order the deeds was drawn, which you on perusal declin'd to execute, for Reason that no Exceptions was made of the Mines and Streams, &c. Since which we have agreed to except them, and Build a Grist Mill together; for which I have your word and your



Letters in my possession, to Confirm it. I did afterwards ask it as a favor to indulge me to build a Saw Mill, meaning "According to the Custom of the Manor;" which you grant to everybody; and a Malt Mill, which would be only for that use, and no other, as it is not possible to make good Clear Beer when Malt is ground in Grist Mills, and it was with you only to Grant or Refuse. However you ought not to Violate your word or promise to the meanest of your Dependents, nor even to your worst of Enemys, and as you cannot consider me in Either Light, how much Less to One who can with Truth assure you to be your Real and Sincere friend and Humble Sevt.

"P. VAN RENSSELAER.

"S. V. RENSSELAER, ESQR.,      "August 20, 1788.  
WATERVLIET."

But the young Patroon was neither haughty nor unjust—he had only been careless, and having no trouble about his own estate, did not appreciate the anxieties of others with smaller means, to the same extent that he did when he had gained more experience in practical life. It is needless to say that this manly remonstrance and appeal drew from him a speedy apology and explanation, and a full satisfaction of all the requests made by his older correspondent.

#### "THE MOUNT."

Among the most charming recollections of my childhood and youth are the visits to Mount Pleasant, the home of my Uncle and Aunt Beekman, situated on the East river where Fifty-second street ends. It is described so fully, in Mrs. Lamb's History of New York, that there is no need to say more about the house except that it was delightfully situated upon rising ground which sloped down to a rocky and precipitous bluff at the the foot of which ran the river.

It was a quaint old house, built before the Revolution by James Beekman, who was a prominent Whig, and a member of the Provincial Congress, and was of course obliged to leave New York in 1776, and removed with his family to Esopus. It was taken possession of by the British and occupied first by General Howe and then by General Clinton and other officers of rank. In a room, near the head of the stairs, Major André slept the night before departing on his mission to the treacherous Arnold. The original decorations of the grand receiving-room of General Clinton, in blue and gold, were preserved.

It had a wide central hall and pleasant varandahs, which were always filled with singing birds, in which my uncle greatly delighted. It was entirely secluded from the noise and heat of the city, and as much in the country as if it had been in the center of Westchester.\* It was a delightful summer home with its grand old trees, its prim garden, its well-filled orchard, its beautiful views, its pleasant drives, and its refreshing breezes. The songs of the birds, the fragrance of the air, and the bright sparkle of the river have always lingered in my memory. The room in which Major André was said to have slept, was allotted to me whenever I visited "The Mount," as it was always called. Of course it had an uncanny reputation and was reputed to be haunted, but this reputation interfered with no one's happiness or enjoyment in it, as far as I ever heard. My aunt was lovely and affectionate, and full of spirits, and made every one about her happy and bright like herself, so

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\* An excellent view of it is given in Mrs. Lamb's History of the City of New York, Vol. 1, p. 569.

that my visits passed away all too rapidly. She honored me above the rest with a special affection as her adopted son, never having had children, and it was a great bereavement when she died, August 29, 1833, universally lamented by all who had ever known her. R. I. P.

Upon the death of my Uncle Beekman in 1838, "The Mount" became the property of his nephew, James W. Beekman, my kinsman and especial friend. He lived in it after his marriage for a couple of years, and then was compelled to abandon it by the miasma which had infected the whole region. The opening of Fifty-second street required the removal of the mansion, and after that the place lost its charm. On March 14, 1843, he wrote me :

"The old Mount House, in which both of us have spent so many days, and which we shall have in mind as long as we live, has safely arrived at the end of its journey ; for you know it has been slowly travelling on timbers all winter towards a new site, about 140 feet south of its old one ; where the pump and fowl-yard used to be. The interior is somewhat racked, and the famous 'Blue Room' to my great regret is so injured that I fear re-plastering will be necessary, and so the charm is gone. But for an untimely and unexpected thaw, long before the regular 'torow taw' of January, we should probably have preserved every thing exactly as it was. However, it might have been worse ; and as I can scarcely expect to reside in the old place again, 'tis perhaps as well that the face of things should be wholly changed there."

#### "A SUMMER RAMBLE."

My grandfather was a great pedestrian, and so was "Uncle William," and so it was not a surprise to me to hear him say, "To-morrow William and I are going to walk over to Uncle Nicky's, and you shall go

along." This was in the summer vacation of 1834, the year before I went to college. Nothing could have pleased me better, for that was a place which I was very fond of visiting. It was a quaint old homestead, situated about three miles below Greenbush on the hillside just under the Boston and Albany Railroad, from which there is an excellent view of the whole place with its little cemetery, where all my venerable kindred whom I saw there and their ancestors are resting in the Lord. It was a country "bouverie" inhabited by quaint and old-fashioned people, who were very kind and hospitable, all which awakend delight in a city-bred child. Everything about it was of the past generation, and delightfully antiquated and simple. An ancient spinster named "Annie Aunje," formed part of the household, and she was always found knitting, the usual occupation of the venerable dames of the period. The language of the family was the ancestral Dutch, which the older generation never gave up. We started on a bright summer's afternoon. The old gentleman was a delightful companion on a walk, and being familiar with every inch of ground, every point, and every house, his conversation was like a discourse on history. Opposite the door of his house, from which we emerged, had been the hill on which stood Fort Frederick, founded by Major Andros in 1676, because Fort Orange had become untenable. Here was stationed, in 1756, Captain Peter Wraaxall, during the old French war, and here his beautiful wife, my great-aunt, afterwards Mrs. John Maunsell, visited him during a lull in the campaign. On the eastern slope of the hill under the fort, opposite Chapel street, stood

the first St. Peter's church, in which were laid the remains of Lord Howe, killed in a skirmish with the French near Ticonderoga, and brought there by Major, afterwards Major-General, Philip Schuyler. My grandfather related how he had seen them removed to be taken to England on the demolition of the church in 1803, and the hair and nails had grown. Lord Howe's remains were removed to Westminster Abbey, where the Colony of Massachusetts had erected a monument to his memory which was very dear to Americans. He said that the last rector, the Rev. Thomas Ellison, who officiated in that building was so admirable a reader of the service that he used to attend the church in the afternoon to hear him. Mrs. Philip S. Van Rensselaer, "Aunt Nancy," who was very fond of Parson Ellison, told me that when they were taking down the old church he used to watch the workmen from their house, which was opposite, and when the last stone was removed he was so overcome that he went to his rectory and never left it again. Our walk took us down State street, past the "Stevenson House" the "Old Elm Tree," Bement's Hotel, and we turned into South Market street, and passed the old State House, the scene of many stirring and important events connected with the history of the State and Nation, where was held the first Continental Congress. All these are now things of the past. And so we came on our way to an open space, where is now the steamboat landing, but at first the site of Fort Orange, the cause and scene of many a bitter contest between the Directors of Rensselaerwyck and the Dutch officers; the place where a violent interview took place between Petrus Stuyves-



ant, "the testy," Governor of Nieuw Netherlands, and Director Schlictenhorst in 1652, in which the Governor is said to have displayed his well-known temper in an excessive degree, ending by "arresting the aforesaid Director of the Colonie, and so bringing him to the Manhattans, and there detaining him."

Crossing the ferry in a boat propelled by horses working a treadmill, or pushing a circular revolving platform with cogs working on the shaft which turned the paddles, we took our way along the river road, which soon brought us to the first house of the Van Rensselaer family built in America, and undoubtedly the oldest continuously inhabited dwelling in the State of New York, if not in the United States. This was unquestionably "the small fort called Crailo," built for the protection of the colonists on the east bank of the river against the hostile Mohicans; Fort Orange affording a place of refuge to those in the Colonie on the west bank. It was named after the family estate near Amsterdam, which remained in possession of the family in Holland until the present century. It was built in 1642, as two inscriptions on the basement wall inside

testify :—	K. V. R. 1642	D <sup>o</sup> Megapolen ;	which
	Anno Dom.		

corroborate each other, as the Dominie came to Beverwyck in that year. It was plainly built for defence, the timbers being eighteen inches square, and the walls being very thick and pierced with port-holes, of which two remain in position in the front wall and others in the cellar, while two others are shown that have been taken out. The south chimney in the cellar is so constructed that nothing can be thrown



down, nor anybody descend — a needed protection against the torches of the savages. In 1740, it was enlarged by my grandfather's uncle Johannes, to whom it had descended from his father Hendrick, and he himself was born in it in 1763, as has been said. It passed, in course of descent, to one of the best and noblest of the name, my kind friend Dr. Jeremiah Van Rensselaer of New York, distinguished among other things more worthy, in having been the first American to make the ascent of Mont Blanc. He was the last of the name who possessed it, and it has passed into the hands of a stranger, remaining in perfect preservation and seeming quite capable of enduring for another two and a half centuries. (Notitia H.)

Not far beyond the mansion was the family cemetery, where his father and mother were buried, the latter not long after bringing him into the world. Soon we came where a few great elms stood on the river's bank, the relics of a large grove which the washing of the stream had reduced to its present dimensions. This was Wolven Hoek, or Wolves' Point, belonging to Mr. John de P. Douw, who had married a niece of my grandfather's, and had left this ancestral homestead to his oldest son, Volkert P. Douw. At that time the old colonial farm-house standing by the roadside was the dwelling, since supplanted by the handsome country seat of Mr. V. P. Douw. Opposite the house on the bank of the river under the old elms were some holes in the ground, to which the old gentleman called my attention, saying that Lord Howe's regiment, the Fifty-sixth, had encamped on that spot in 1758, on its way to the disastrous battle

at Ticonderoga, just before which Lord Howe had been killed in a skirmish. At that time there was space enough between the road and the river to accommodate the whole regiment, and these holes marked the places where the soldiers boiled their camp-kettles. The river has made such inroads since our visit that I believe all vestige of the trees is gone, and even the road has been washed away. On the opposite side of the river we had a full view of the venerable mansion of "Cherry Hill," on the side of a hill, built by Colonel Philip Van Rensselaer, one of his brothers, in 1768.

Grandfather, Uncle William and the youngster trudged along in a most sociable way on that bright August afternoon without being oppressed with the heat of the sun, to which indeed we paid no attention. Nothing can be conceived more beautiful than a walk along the Hudson at that particular spot; the broad river with its verdant banks and the "unnumbered smile" of its ripples and waves, and a mighty sturgeon suddenly springing from the water dripping with spray and leaving, as he disappeared in an instant,

"Circles widening round  
Upon the clear blue river;"

the graceful sloops and schooners with their white sails, and the swiftly gliding steamers; the green fields sloping up into the hills covered with woods; the comfortable mansions and farm-houses with stately venerable trees; and the distant mountains, all combine to form a scene of unsurpassed beauty. So it was on the day of our excursion. As we sauntered along, our venerable guide and mentor indicated the scenes of events familiar to him in his childhood and

youth. Many years afterwards while reading "the Excursion," I found our walk aptly described in the lines of Wordsworth on "The Wanderer":

"What wonder then if I

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Look'd on this guide with reverential love!  
Each with the other pleased, we now pursued  
Our journey beneath favorable skies.  
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light  
Unfailing; not a hamlet could we pass,  
Rarely a house, which did not yield to him  
Remembrances; or from his tongue call forth  
Some way-beguiling tale."

In one old house on a hill-side a soldier had been murdered in the French war, and it had the reputation of being haunted. He pointed out the house where his father, Colonel Killian Van Rensselaer, had died in 1782. Near by he had seen "Poor's Brigade," in 1777, sent by General Washington to re-inforce Gates at Saratoga; the men enlivened their march by singing Sternhold and Hopkins' psalms, and had no doubt of going to heaven if they were killed in battle with the British. This brigade, in fact, rendered signal service in the campaign against Burgoyne, and covered itself with glory.

After a sauntering walk of about three miles, the latter third of which had led us from the road along the river into one ascending into the hills, we found ourselves at the homestead whither we were bound. It was a venerable two-story brick house inherited by my uncle with "Aunt Elsie" from his father-in-law, Major Van Buren. His family consisted of a widowed daughter, Mrs. Whitbeck, with a son and two daughters, and a son, Cornelius, who had lately become a widower; these, with the venerable couple and "Annie Auntije," made the old house

lively. A hall ran through the middle of the dwelling, and on the right side of it was that sacred place in a Dutch home — the best parlor. This was scrupulously closed, except on the occasion of weddings, christenings, funerals, and family or social entertainments. It was a dishonor for a good Dutch housewife not to keep this arcanum in perfect order, and at the same time keep it secluded from all unhallowed feet. I do not remember whether the parlor was opened for us on this visit or not; but I think it could not have been, as we had come in quite an informal way. My uncle was eighty years old, and a hale, hearty old man with a very sweet and kindly face, and a very quiet and cordial manner. It did not impress me then as it does now — the sight of those brothers, one eighty the other seventy-one, who had both passed through so many stirring scenes and experienced so many vicissitudes, so like boys in their affectionate intercourse. Old trees overshadowed the house, and under these the venerable brothers would sit after breakfast, and chat about times past, while "Uncle Nicky" enjoyed his morning pipe — a form in which my grandfather did not use his tobacco. Behind the house rises a hill, and in front the ground slopes down to the lowlands through which flows the Hudson, beyond which are the hills which make the lower spurs of the Helderberg mountains, the whole furnishing a most beautiful panorama. Climbing the hill one gained a most extensive, varied and charming view of the valley of the Hudson, with the Catskill mountains in the distance, and on the other side, of the Berkshire hills and the mountains of Massachusetts. In the distance we could see the sails of ves-

sells passing up and down the river, and the smoke from the funnel of an occasional steamboat; but the great invention of George Stephenson had not yet invaded the region, and no echo returned the puff and roar and scream of the railway train, and as far as my venerable kinsmen were concerned, truth compels me to admit that they hoped it never would, and did all in their power to prevent the possibility of it. In this they certainly had a great authority on their side, which they would never have suspected in their seclusion; for it is well known that William Wordsworth was the barrier that stopped the building of the railway beyond Windermere!

Among the calls which were made during this visit was a particularly noticeable one upon a neighbor of my uncle's of whom I had often read and heard, and was very anxious to see — Mr. Edme C. Genet. He was a native of France, and came to the United States in 1793, as Ambassador from the French Republic. He had incurred the hostility of our government by attempting to fit out privateers to aid in the war then going on between France and England, and President Washington had issued a proclamation to stop his proceedings, and caused him to be recalled.

His reception on his arrival in New York was thus described by the venerable Dr. Alexander Anderson among the recollections of his early life: "He was a good-looking man, of courteous manners, and quick in his movements and speech. His head resembled that of Tom Paine in shape, particularly his forehead. He had a large aquiline nose and piercing dark eyes. I saw him land at the Battery when he came from Philadelphia, a representative of the French Republic.



There was a great hubbub at his landing — cannon-firing, drum-beating and wild hurraing. A grand procession with bands of music received him and escorted him to the Coffee House near the foot of Wall street. I was then eighteen years old and took much interest in politics. The two parties, Federalists and Republicans, abused each other most shamefully. The Republicans blamed Washington for issuing his famous proclamation of neutrality, for they wanted to help the French revolutionists. They almost worshipped Genet. They wore the French tri-colored cockade on their hats, and that night the Marseilles hymn was sung in the streets. My father was a Federalist, and of course so was I. I went to a gathering on Broadway, near Maiden lane, and heard Colonel Troup, a Federalist, make a speech in commendation of Washington's proclamation, and several resolutions of the same tenor were adopted." He never returned to France, having married a daughter of Governor George Clinton. His place occupied a commanding site a mile or two from my uncle's, from which there is one of the grandest and most extensive views in the whole region. My great-uncle, General Hendrick K. Van Rensselaer, whose skill and bravery at the defence of Fort Ann had saved the American army in 1777, had lived there before the Revolution, and General Solomon Van Rensselaer was born in it in 1774. (See Notitia E.) There we were received by him, a very dignified and courteous old gentleman, with all the grace and urbanity of his nation, and the cordiality of friendly neighborhood in which they had lived for many years. Mme. Ney, wife of the celebrated and unfortunate Marshal, "the bravest of the

brave," as Napoleon had styled his favorite Marshal, was the niece of Mr. Genet, and her portrait with that of the Marshal hung on the wall, which was adorned with many likenesses of distinguished persons in France and the United States. I never met him after this call, but I have a very distinct recollection of his courtesy and agreeable conversation, and, what was not the least pleasing characteristic in the eyes of a boy of fifteen, his condescension in conversing with me so as to make me feel entirely at my ease — the proof that he possessed not merely agreeable manners but a good heart. Mr. Genet spoke English so perfectly that no one could have detected his foreign birth and education. I never met but one other Frenchman of whom this could be said; this was M. le Comte de G. Flamarens, *Senateur sous l' Empire*, anc. *Chambellan Honre de Napoleon III*, whom we met at the Hotel Anglo-Americano in Rome, May 1, 1877, and who told us that he had visited our country with the Marquis La Fayette, and had travelled in all parts of the north and south. He, like Mr. Genet, spoke English without the slightest accent which could show that he was a Frenchman. He seemed very pleased to meet Americans, and behaved to us with great courtesy, exchanging cards and good wishes, which was all that we could do, as we left Rome for Florence the next morning. One of Mr. Genet's sons afterwards married a granddaughter of my uncle's.

I was so charmed with my visit that I wrote an account of it to my kinsman and constant correspondent, J. W. Beekman, and have preserved his reply:

"You seem to have had a pleasant ramble there over the river — and with so agreeable a companion, too — it must

have been a real treat. Having more than once had the pleasure of listening to your Grandfather's tales of the Olden time — about the battle of Saratoga, and Poor's Brigade, and all that — I know how to appreciate the gratification you speak of."

Among the curious customs of the Dutch which survived to my day was that of inviting friends "to drink punch" after a wedding at the house of the groom's father. Among the MSS. of my grandfather is a list of "Guests to drink Punch, 1833, Barney's Wedding." They were sixty-six in number, all leading State officers and other citizens of Albany, not one of whom survives, the last of them having been Mr. George Dexter, who died in 1883, fifty years after the festivity.

#### "VISIT OF LA FAYETTE — VETERANS OF THE REVOLUTION."

One of the most pleasing reminiscences of my childhood is connected with the visit of the Marquis de La Fayette to this country in 1824-5. Great preparations had been made for his reception in Albany, which was the home of many officers and men of the Revolutionary army who had served under his command. It had been expected that he would arrive in the morning, and while the veterans of Saratoga, Valley Forge and Yorktown were drawn up at the ferry where he was to be welcomed to the capital, waiting impatiently to see their beloved commander after a separation of thirty-three years, the civilians were occupying every house-top and window and every "coign o' vantage" that afforded a view of the point on the river four miles below the city, where

he was to land. The upper rear windows of my grandfather's house were admirably situated for the purpose, and we all took our stand there, expecting to see very soon the smoke announcing the approach of the "Nation's Guest," in whom we all claimed a share. But hour after hour passed away without any smoke or steamboat or La Fayette. I remember the whole scene as if it had occurred yesterday, so great was the impatience and anxiety. There was no telegraph to tell us the cause, and we were left to conjecture any mishap or accident that suggested itself to our fancies or our fears. It was especially trying to the children as the night approached and with it "the hour for retiring" as fixed in those orderly times as the laws of the Medes and Persians. But just as evening began to draw its sable mantle around us and before the dreaded order to bed had been given, the booming of cannon, the ringing of bells and the shouts of the people announced the arrival of the great man, who had been carried on shore far down the river to receive welcomes not arranged for — spontaneous outbursts of enthusiasm and rejoicing, and so had come upon them unexpectedly as well as dilatorily. Then came the procession to the Capitol and the formal reception by the Governor and State officers.

The Marquis repeated his visit to Albany twice before his final departure from the country, and it was at one of the formal receptions that were given him at the Capitol that I saw what made an indelible impression on my child-imagination — the veterans of the Revolution in their uniform of blue and buff, buckskin breeches and cocked hats with tall, red

feathers towering above them making them seem to me like giants as I gazed up at them in their stalwart proportions. They seemed to my fancy to have come from the grave, so far back appeared the time that had made them famous.

On one of these occasions a formal reception was given to the Marquis at the house of General Solomon Van Rensselaer, who was in command of his escort. I was taken to this by my mother, and had the honor to hand to the Marquis a snuff-box which had belonged to Marie Antoinette, and which a lady present (Mrs. Clinton, I believe) wished to show him, selecting the youngest one in the room as her page. The Marquis received it with his usual graciousness and cordiality, and put his hand on my head with a blessing. Mrs. Bonney has given a very complete account of the visit of La Fayette, including an interesting call which he made on her grandmother at Cherry Hill, who had done him kindness in the Revolution when he was passing through Albany. [*Legacy of Historical Gleanings*, I., 411-18.]

In connection with this I must record a pleasing incident connected with this visit which was told me by General Hillhouse. His grandfather, Major Ten Broeck, had been an officer in Colonel Van Schaick's regiment in La Fayette's division. He was quite advanced when his old commander came but was determined to see him. It was known that the General was to go from Albany to Troy by the canal, which had just been opened. On the day when he was to pass the Major, who lived on the farm between Albany and Troy, took his hat and cane and said that he was going to join his old chief on the packet-boat.



Suggestions that he would not recognize him and remonstrances could not dissuade him, and he only replied that he had something to remind the General of that would make him remember him. So he disappeared and did not return till night. When asked about his experience he said that he had caught the boat and was taken on board and found the General. "And did he remember you?" was asked in something of a triumphant way. "Not at first," said the old veteran, "but when I reminded him of something at Valley Forge he remembered me perfectly." And then he told his family that when they were there a party of distinguished Frenchmen came to visit their gallant countryman in camp, and he had ordered out his division to do them honor. Van Schaick and his officers, on hearing it, waited on the General and begged that they might be excused because they were in rags and unfit to appear in presence of such distinguished strangers. But La Fayette refused, saying, "Never mind your clothes; when I tell them of the battles you have fought they will not mind your clothes." "When I recalled it to him he remembered me at once." Ten years after this another cortege wended its slow and solemn way through the streets of Albany and all the cities of the nation in honor of La Fayette, but their banners were draped in crape, their drums were muffled, and funeral dirges filled the air with sounds of mourning for the dead, and never with more sincerity of sorrow than when they bewailed the decease of the friend of Washington and of America.

Among the recollections of my early days none is more vivid and pleasant than the meeting the many

venerable and distinguished men who had survived from a past generation and were in the habit of calling at the old mansion. Among them was Major Adam Hoops of "the Maryland Line," who had been aide to General Sullivan when he marched against the Senecas and swept them from their strongholds from the Cayuga to the Genesee, and destroyed their power to lay waste the frontiers and murder the defenceless people as in the slaughter at Wyoming and Cherry Valley. After the war Major Hoops was commissioned by President John Adams in the Second Regiment of Artillery, raised in 1798, of which John Doughty of New Jersey was Lieutenant-Colonel, he was kept in the army ever afterwards, and when he used to visit at my grandfather's was attached to the ordnance department and stationed at the arsenal at Watervliet. He always wore gray and preserved the old-fashioned military cue. His bearing was always exceedingly courteous and soldierly, and he has left on my mind the impression of an excellent specimen of the old-school style of gentleman.

Different from Major Hoops, and yet remarkable in his way, was Captain Matthew Gregory, of the "Connecticut Line," who had served seven years under the immediate command of Washington, and esteemed it the greatest honor of his life that he had been privileged to dine with the Chief *four* times. He used to point with especial satisfaction to the signature of the General attached to the certificate of his membership in the Society of the Cincinnati. Captain Gregory's story of his services was, that his father had taken him from his humble home on a farm at Wilton, Connecticut, and put him into the army

then on Long Island. He took part in the battles of Long Island, White Plains, the retreat into New Jersey, and all the principal actions fought by Washington's army during the war. He spent the terrible winter at Valley Forge, where, he said, they slept on bean-poles two weeks. He used to recall, with especial gratification, the time when the French army arrived to join ours, and brought with them new clothing for the ragged Americans—a luxury from which they had been debarred for a long time. They were stationed then at Peekskill, and felt greatly set up by their new clothes. His regiment marched to Yorktown, where it was attached to La Fayette's famous Light Division, and his company, in which he was Lieutenant, formed part of the storming party under Colonel Alexander Hamilton which carried one of the British redoubts at the point of the bayonet, and it made a deep impression on him to see the British soldiers on their knees begging for quarter. The siege of Yorktown was noted for the number of diaries kept by different officers during its progress, among which was one kept by Lieutenant Gregory, detailing very clearly and accurately the scenes which he witnessed; it is in the possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Root, of Geneva, and is marked by the modesty and reserve about himself and his share in the exploits distinguishing the soldiers of Washington. Among the incidents upon which he used to dwell was the anxiety and care of the officers and men for the safety of their beloved Commander-in-chief whenever he appeared in the trenches, and their importunity in urging him to retire from the place of exposure, which it was their especial duty to keep. In speaking of the

contrast between the ragged condition of the Continentals and the well-clad Frenchmen and British, he would say that they were "all rag-tag and bob-tail." After the disbanding of the army he moved to Albany and became proprietor of the "Eagle Tavern," a famous hotel near the present steamboat landing, which was the resort of all the leading persons of the time, and especially because of its being kept by Captain Gregory, a soldier of the Revolution. Here he amassed a considerable fortune, and while I knew him was accounted one of the rich men of Albany, and kept a carriage and horses. When General La Fayette visited Albany, as Captain Gregory had served under him at Yorktown, his house, which stood on the west side of the Capitol Park contiguous to the General's lodging, Congress Hall, was chosen for the reception of the citizens by their distinguished guest, a covered way having been made from the rear of the hotel to the windows of Mr. Gregory's drawing-room. He passed away June 4, 1848, in the ninety-seventh year of his age. My grand-uncle Nicholas had preceded him, having "rested in the Lord" March 29th, in his ninety-fourth year.

Major William Popham, to whom the letter opposite was addressed by my grandfather in his seventy-eighth year, was a distinguished officer of the Revolution, and died President of the New York Society of the Cincinnati and President-General of the society in the United States. Like my great-grandmother Dunkin, he was born in Ireland, which was a bond of friendship between them. Like her too he reached a patriarchal age, dying in 1847, in his ninety-fifth year. A sketch of his career, with a striking and beautiful

portrait, is given in Schuyler's History of the Cincinnati. This letter, which, in its language of cordial affection as well as warm hospitality and paternal benediction, is a true transcript of the venerable writer. will fitly conclude this humble tribute to his memory.



Albany May 4.<sup>th</sup> 1841

B. Si

My grand son Manuel Van Rensselaer, the  
bearer of this letter, I beg leave to introduce to your  
acquaintance. He is also the grand son of your  
old esteemed friend Mrs. Anne Durbin, of the  
city of Philadelphia, deceased.

My <sup>son</sup> resides near you in the  
Theological School, preparing himself for the  
Ministry, and I believe he is to be ordained, or ad-  
mitted to officiate to a certain extent & is very well not.

I trust, with the blessing of Heaven, he  
will do much good in his day.

It would gratify me much, if you would come  
up to Albany and spend a few weeks with me.  
I persuaded it would be of service to you. I shall  
be highly gratified to learn that you are of the  
same opinion - and give the welcome of it in ap-  
-proving in person. I must close. I respectfully  
Yours truly, H. Van Rensselaer

Major William Topham.



## NOTITIA.

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### THE SOURCES OF THE FAMILY HISTORY.

1. Monuments, tombstones, etc., in Guelderland, and a portrait of Jan Van Rensselaer in the Orphan Asylum at Nykerk, painted in 1645, with those of the other regents.
  2. The Rensselaerwyck MSS.
  3. A Family-tree made in Holland in 1763, in my possession.
  4. The records of the different branches.
- The following may be consulted :
- Holgate's "American Genealogy."  
New York Colonial History Documents.  
O'Callaghan's "History of the New Netherlands."  
Broadhead's "History of the New Netherlands."  
Pearson's "Early Settlers of Albany."  
Munsell's Historical Collections of Albany.  
Weise's "History of Albany."  
Schuyler's "Colonial New York."  
"Bi-centennial History of Albany and Schenectady."  
Mrs. Grant's "Memoirs of an American Lady."  
New York Historical Society Collections.  
Magazine of American History, January, 1884.  
Publications of the Bi-centennial Celebration at Albany, 1886.
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A., p. 2.

### GENEALOGY IN THE LINE OF KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER.

I. HENDRICK WOLTERS	m.	SWENE v. IMYCK.
II. JOHANNES HENDRICK	m.	DERYKEBIA v. LUPOEL.
III. KILIAEN	m.	NELLE v. VRENOKUM.
IV. HENDRICK	m.	MARIA PASRAAT.
V. KILIAEN	m.	ANNA v. WEELY.
VI. JEREMIAS	m.	MARIA v. CORTLANDT.
VII. HENDRICK	m.	CATHARINE v. BRUGGEN.
VIII. KILIAEN	m.	ARIANTJE SCHUYLER.

- IX. KILLIAN K. m. MARGARETTA SANDERS.  
 (John Sanders, b. April 10, 1792; d. March 19, 1868.)  
 (William, b. April 10, 1794; d. Nov. 9, 1855.)  
 (Deborah Sanders, b. Sept. 27, 1795; d. Sept. 4, 1796.)  
 (Richard, b. Dec. 24, 1797; d. March 29, 1880.)  
 (m. Elizabeth Van Rensselaer, d. Jan. 1, 1835.)  
 (Deborah Sanders, b. Sept. 25, 1827; d. Feb. 23, 1832.)  
 (Maria Elizabeth, b. Feb. 27, 1829; d. Dec. 6, 1865.)  
 (Edward, b. Sept. 21, 1830; d. April 29, 1831.)  
 (Harrison, b. June 9, 1832; d. July 9, 1833.)  
 (m. Matilda Fonda Van Rensselaer; d. May 9, 1863.)  
 (Bernard Sanders, b. Jan. 12, 1801; d. June 25, 1879.)  
 (m. Elizabeth Hun; d. June 25, 1834.)  
 (m. Mary Targee; d. Sept. 1, 1858.)
- X. JOHN SANDERS m. ANN DUNKIN.
- XI. *Dunkin Henry*, b. Aug. 1, 1817; d. Sept. 18, 1819.
- XII. *Maunsell*, b. Apr. 15, 1819; m. Sept. 23, 1847, to *Sarah Ann Taylor*.  
 (24.) Caroline Matilda, b. Aug. 30, 1848; m. Nov. 23, 1876, to Phineas P. Hillhouse; d. Sept. 27, 1878.  
 (28.) Anne Dunkin, b. July 7, 1853; d. Feb. 21, 1864.  
 (36.) Maunsell, b. April 29, 1859; m. Oct. 23, 1884, to Isabella Mason.  
 (lxii.) Bernard Sanders, b. Jan. 1, 1886.  
 (lxiv.) Arthur Mason, b. June 29, 1888.  
 (38.) James Taylor, b. April 12, 1861; m. Sept. 5, 1888, to Agnes Sarah Bradley.  
 (39.) Maria Louisa, b. July 1, 1863; d. Feb. 6, 1870.  
 (43.) Sarah Ann, b. May 18, 1866; d. April 15, 1867.  
 (44.) Bernard Sanders, b. May 18, 1866; d. Jan. 23, 1870.
- XIII. *Margaretta Sanders*, b. Jan. 1, 1821; d. June 16, 1879; m. June 7, 1843, to *Joseph W. Russell*; d. Oct. 13, 1847.  
 (21.) Joseph W., b. June 6, 1844; m. Nov. 15, 1882, to Frances Clara Brown.  
 (lix.) Charles Watkins, b. May 6, 1884.  
 (22.) Anne Van Rensselaer, b. Dec. 7, 1846.
- XIV. *Charles Watkins*, b. Jan. 29, 1823; d. Sept. 12, 1857.
- XV. *Ann Eliza*, b. April 5, 1825; m. July 14, 1847, to *Alexander H. Hoff, M. D.*; d. Aug. 19, 1876. (Notitia H.)  
 (23.) John S. Van Rensselaer, b. April 11, 1848; m. June 22, 1875, to Virginia Day.  
 (26.) Carolina Clay, b. Aug. 1, 1850; m. March 27, 1870, to Lieut. Edward Hunter, U. S. A.  
 (xliv.) Henry Hoff, b. Dec. 31, 1870.  
 (lvi.) Jane R., b. July 15, 1882.  
 (lxiii.) John Saunders, b. Oct. 22, 1887.  
 (28.) Elizabeth Dunkin, b. June 8, 1852; m. Dec. 15, 1880, to Thomas Lyman Greene.  
 (lvii.) Van Rensselaer Hoff, b. Jan. 15, 1883.  
 (lx.) Anne Dunkin, b. Jan. 12, 1885.  
 (33.) Harriet L., b. April 16, 1857.
- XVI. *Lydia Beckman*, b. May 25, 1827; m. April 25, 1849, to *John Sill*.  
 (25.) Anne Dunkin, b. March 24, 1850; m. April 3, 1877, to the Rev. William H. Gallagher.

- (lii.) Elizabeth Dunkin, b. Feb. 23, 1878.
- (liv.) Lydia Beekman, b. Nov. 20, 1879.
- (lv.) William Henry, b. Sept. 1, 1881.
- (lviii.) John Sill, b. Oct. 20, 1883.
- (lxi.) Julia Trinita, b. Aug. 18, 1885.
- (27.) Louisa Griswold, b. Nov. 16, 1851.
- (30.) Dunkin Henry, b. Sept. 20, 1853.
- (31.) Maria Viele, b. March 3, 1855.
- (32.) Kate Van Rensselaer, b. Jan. 31, 1857; d. March 12, 1883.
- (34.) John Targee, b. Oct. 30, 1858.
- (37.) Lydia Nicoll, b. March 11, 1861; d. Dec. 8, 1862.
- (41.) Margaret Mather, b. Jan 18, 1864.
- (45.) Richard Van Rensselaer, b. May 20, 1866.
- (47.) Eugenia Thorne, b. March 28, 1868; d. May 18, 1886.
- XVII. *Harriet Letitia*, b. Jan. 19, 1830; m. Oct. 26, 1852, to *Leonard Kip*.
- XVIII. *Samuel Watkins*, b. Feb. 28, 1832; d. Nov. 17, 1839.
- XIX. *Catherine Sanders*, b. Nov. 16, 1834; m. Oct. 6, 1857, to *Lieut. Robert Johnston, U. S. A.*
- (35.) Robert, b. Dec. 30, 1858; d. Sept. 24, 1887.
- (38.) Dunkin Van Rensselaer, b. Jan. 27, 1862.
- (42.) Russell McCaw, b. July 6, 1864.
- (46.) Catharine Van Rensselaer, b. March 6, 1867.
- (48.) Leonard Kip, b. May 17, 1869.
- (50.) James McCaw, b. July 27, 1871.
- (51.) Charles Van Rensselaer, b. March 26, 1875.
- (52.) Malcolm Sanders, b. July 2, 1876.
- XX. *Louisa*, b. March 17, 1838; d. Oct. 19, 1862; m. Dec. 18, 1860, to *Charles de Kay Townsend*.
- (39.) Charles Van Rensselaer, b. Oct. 6, 1862.

## STILLWELL GENEALOGY.

Stillwell married a daughter of Coke the Regicide.

Their son was :

RICHARD STILLWELL, who married MERCY SANDS.

LYDIA STILLWELL married JOHN WATKINS.

Elizabeth Watkins married Robert Henry Dunkin.

Ann Dunkin married John S. Van Rensselaer.

B., p. 1.

I went to Amersfoort, to Nykerk, and to several other towns in Guelderland. At Amersfoort there is a table in the church of St. Joris or St. George, on which is mentioned Harmanus Van Rensselaer as one of the regents of the church in 1636. Dr. is prefixed to his name, which may mean either doctor or dominie. There is also a tomb of a Captain Van Rensselaer, who died from a wound received at the battle of Nieuport. This is covered up by the wood



flooring, so that I could not see it, but I am promised the inscription. In the orphan asylum at Nykerk there is a very fine picture of the first regents—1638. The picture is painted by Breecker in 1645. There are two noblemen in the picture—Nicholaus Van Delen and Jan Van Rensselaer. Every one present, while I was looking at the picture, thought that I looked very much like the Van Rensselaer. Of the four others, one is of Rykert Van Twiller, a connection of the Van Rensselaer family. Among the orphans is one named Van Twiller, and we therefore contributed a small sum for him. It would be very easy to have a large photograph taken of this picture. I do not suppose it would cost over twenty dollars to have a number of copies. If it should be wanted by any of the Van Rensselaers I could easily arrange it. The notary at Nykerk was very kind and gave me a deed signed by Richard Van Rensselaer June 5, 1777. It conveys a small piece of land near Nykerk. The original manor of the family, from which the Van Rensselaers took their name, still is called "Rensselaer," and is about three miles south-east of Nykerk. It was originally a *Reddergoed*, the possession of which conferred nobility. Two other Van Rensselaers are named in the lists of regents of the orphan asylum—Richard in 1753, and Jeremias in 1803.

The last member of the family in Holland who bore the name was Jeremias Van Rensselaer. He died in Nykerk April 11, 1819. He married Judee Henrietta Duval, had no children, and in his will stated that, except his wife, he had no heirs except the Van Rensselaer family then living somewhere in America. My friend, Mr. Van Rensselaer Beusekom, married the daughter of a Van Bowier, related to Sir George Bowyer, a well-known Catholic member of the English Parliament. The wife of Van Bowier was a Miss Van Rensselaer, the last of that branch. Mrs. Van Beusekom's brothers have now the royal license to assume the name and arms of Van Rensselaer. The eldest and head of the family is now the commander of the Dutch naval forces off Atchin, and on his return this autumn will be promoted to Admiral.

Mrs. Van Bowier, the mother of Mrs. Van Beusekom, was born at the Crailo, then in the Van Rensselaer possession. I am told it is a large estate for Holland, and is near the town of Naarden, which is on the Zuider Zee, between Amsterdam and Amersfoort. It is now all divided and sold.

It rained so hard that I could not go there. The estate of *Rensselaer*, near Nykerk, is now only a farm. All the old buildings have been taken down. A few years ago there were gables and weather-cocks, with the arms and crest, but all are now removed. There was scarcely a church that I visited in Guelderland that did not have, somewhere, the Van Rensselaer arms on tomb-stones, either alone or quartered with others. I am told that they married with all the best families, and at one time had much influence. I shall have inquires made about Richard Van Rensselaer, who was burgomaster or treasurer of Vianew in 1695. It seems that Vianew was a town which possessed to a late date the right of asylum for criminals, and to prevent the privilege from being abused the burgomaster was appointed by the States General.

The exact arms of the Van Rensselaers are a white or silver cross on a red ground. The crest is a white basket, not castle, with yellow flames, above a closed helmet. The cross is exactly represented in Webster's Dictionary, under the word "*pomme*."

*Eugene Schuyler.*

Richard, youngest son of the first Patroon, came to Albany, and was one of its magistrates for several years. He occupied the *bouvery* called the "flatts," four miles north of the city, which, on his return to Holland, about 1670, he sold to Philip Schuyler. After his return to Holland he was employed in public life, at one time treasurer of Vianew, and also burgomaster. He died after 1695, leaving five sons and three daughters, of whom four sons and one daughter were married. It will be seen that the first Patroon had five grandsons married and settled in Holland, and only two in America. The line in Holland is extinguished; none left to bear the name, not even an heir to Jeremias Van Rensselaer when he died in 1819. On the other hand, the American line has extended and is extending almost indefinitely. The heirs of the first patroon held his estates in common until 1695, nearly fifty years after his death. At that time all his children were dead except his youngest son, Richard, and his daughter, Leonora.

In 1695, Killian Van Rensselaer, of Holland (son of Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer, deceased), came to New York, and entered into negotiation with his cousin, Killian Van Rensselaer, of Albany (son of Jeremias Van Rensselaer,

deceased), for a settlement of their grandfather's estate. On the 25th November, 1695, the settlement was complete and the legal papers executed. The Hollander for himself, and as attorney for his uncle Richard, his aunt Leonora and the children of his aunt Susanna, deceased, released to the Albanian for himself, and as attorney for his brothers Johannes and Hendrick, and for his sisters Anna and Maria, all the manor of Rensselaerwyck, "containing 700,000 acres of tillable land," all the Claverack tract of 60,000 acres, except three farms, and all the personal property except "700 pieces of eight." (\$700.) The Albanian released to the Hollander all the estate, real, personal and contingent, in Holland, of which the *Crailo* estate, and a tract of land in Guelderland formed a part.

Four of the nine children of the first Patroon had died without heirs. His widow was also dead. Consequently the estate was divided into five parts, one for the family in Albany and the other four for the heirs in Holland. Measuring the whole estate by our conceptions of the value of that in America we would be likely to form an erroneous judgment as to its amount. Lands at that time in the province of New York were cheap, very cheap. Hundreds of acres could be bought of the Indians for goods and trinkets which did not cost as many hundreds of cents. The whole estate measured by the sum which the Hollander stipulated to pay to his unmarried aunt, Leonora, 2,000 guilders (\$800) "Holland money, in one payment," could not have been large in the modern sense. But then a guilder (forty cents) in solid cash at that time was equivalent to several of our gold dollars now, to say nothing of the fiat silver dollar.

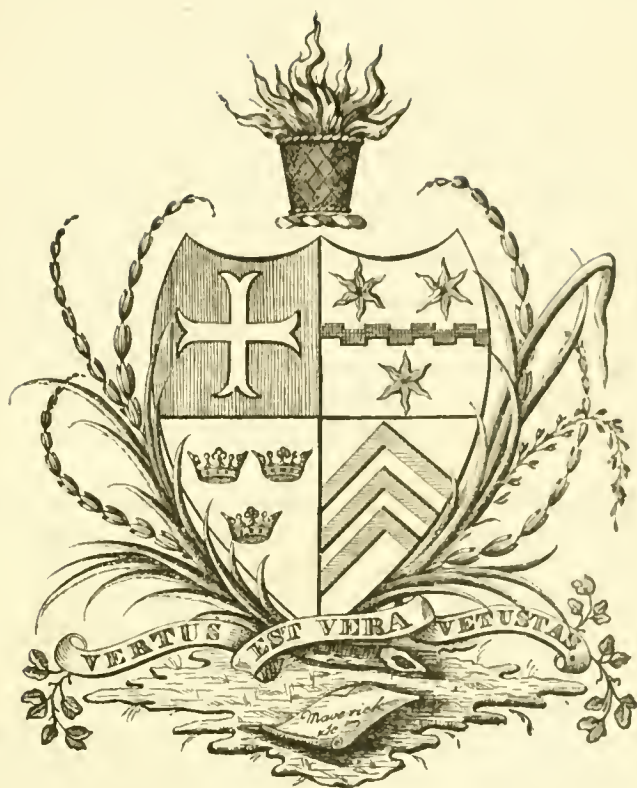
*George W. Schuyler.*

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C., p. 14.

#### THE VAN RENSSELAER MOTTO AND CREST.

Holgate in his *American Genealogy* is the authority for "Niemand Zonder:" "The coat-of-arms of the family is remarkable for a cross bearing the motto, *Niemand Zonder*, 'no one without (a cross),' " p. 41. His sources of information were original—"the family memorials;" he is very accurate and does not depend on mere tradition. The crusader's cross is said to have been granted for services



*K. K. Van Rensselaer Esq<sup>r</sup>.*





rendered the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and the motto agrees with it remarkably. It is in the national tongue, terse, suggestive, and admirably fitted for a battle-cry. My grandfather's coat-of-arms bears the motto, "Virtus est vera vetustas" — "Manliness is true antiquity;" which is only another form of the Washington motto, "Virtus est vera nobilitas," and bears no relation to the shield and crest. I am ignorant what the authority for it may be. I am informed by one of his descendants that the Patroon's motto was "Omnibus fulgeo" — "I shine for all" — which seems to be a free translation of the original Dutch. But neither of them has the terseness, vigor and ring of "Niemand Zonder." As for the interpretation given by Holgate, he does not say where he got it, but it does not seem to me the best of which it is capable. "The cross (of Christ) is for every one" is much more expressive, especially when it is remembered that it was used when great danger was to be encountered in battle. And it is pleasant to think that our forefathers encouraged one another with this cry when they met the hosts of Alva and Alexander Farnese in defence of their faith and fatherland. It recalled the famous vision of the cross with the words "In hoc signo vinces," which Constantine saw before his great victory. I accept "Niemand Zonder" then as the original and only worthy motto of our clan.

As for the crest;—according to the window-pane of Jan Baptist, 1656, it is a "basket of flames," and not a "burning castle." But what is a "basket of flames?" Who ever saw it? It was always a puzzle to me, and I used to amuse myself by thinking it represented a beacon light, which for a border family, as ours was, would not have been inappropriate. But I learned the undoubted meaning in Geneva, Switzerland, where I found in a retired street an ancient *cresset* left in its place on a wall from the middle ages; it was an iron basket made to hold burning sticks or other combustibles to light the streets at night. It was unmistakably the Van Rensselaer crest. With this clue I found a beautiful meaning in crest, shield and motto, perfectly harmonizing, "The Cross, a light unto our paths—no one without (it)," "The Cross shines for all."

EXTRACTS OF THE WILL OF KILLIAN VAN RENSS-  
SELAER RECORDED IN THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE  
OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW YORK IN LIB. WILLS,  
NO. 9, FOL. 167, ETC.

*Item*, I do give, devise and bequeath unto Rensselaer Nicolls, youngest son of my Sister Anne Nicholls, and to his Heirs forever all that Farm at Bethlehem in my said Manor now in possession of William Van Allaen, with the Island called Niefie's Island : Beginning at the south side of Bethlehem Creek and extending southward to the Bounds of Barent Pietersen Coeyman's Land and backwards into the woods from Hudson's River one English Mile ; the Farm on the North side of Bethlehem containing ten or twelve Acres as in Fence where the House and Barn of Caysome lately stood, with the Priviledge of keeping a saw Mill on the south side of the said Creek where now a saw mill stands, and with the Liberty of Cutting and Carrying to his said saw Mill three hundred Saw Loggs yearly for ever within the Liberty of the said Manor, and also of Cutting Timber, Firewood and Fencing, with Common of Pasture for Cattell : Yielding and paying therefore yearly and every year for ever unto the Lord of the said Manor for the time being the full Tenth of the said hereby given and Devised Farm and premises according to the Custom of the said Manor.

PROVIDED always, and this last Devise to the said Rensselaer Nicolls and his Heirs is upon this Condition that no further Claim be hereafter made upon me or my Heirs, Executors and Administrators or any of them for, of, or out of my said Manor or any part thereof by any of the heirs of my said Sister Anne Nicolls, Claiming as heir to her, or as Executors or Administrators to her for any Estate which she might be entituled to either in right of her first Husband or the first Husband's Sister, or of any other Person or Persons in Holland ; this last Devise and Gift being by me made in that Consideration, as I have often been Desired and requested to do by my said Sister in her life-time, and at last I did Consent and promis to her in her life-time to do. And in case any such claim should hereafter be made by her Heirs, Executors or Administrators or any of them Contrary to the true Intent and Meaning thereof

then the said Gift and Devise to the said Rensselaer Nicolls and his heirs to be utterly Void and of none Effect.

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E., p. 42.

## VAN RENSSELAERS OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY THE HON. KILLIAN K. VAN RENSSELAER.

Whatever prejudice now exists against the *Manor influence* in the counties of Albany and Rensselaer, it was fortunate for the American independence that it existed and was exerted with all its energy at the dawn of the Revolution, to give impulse to its progress. Whilst some other manors in the State held back until after the surrender of Burgoyne, the upper and lower manors of the Van Rensselaers struck out at once for American freedom; and by so doing enlisted in its cause all their numerous connections of blood, marriage and dependence; and thus produced a counterpoise to the numerous and powerful Tory families residing in those frontier counties.

The Van Rensselaer name in 1776 was borne by 18 males. During the Revolutionary struggle *every adult* bearing the name of Van Rensselaer (except two old men, my father's brothers, John and Henry, and four boys) bore arms at one or more battles during its progress. My father's family is an illustration of this. His name was Killian. He was a member of the Committee of Safety — at one time president of it — in the northern district of the State of New York, whose decrees were law. He held the commission of Colonel, and was a member of the Legislature. His son Nicholas joined the 1st regiment of the New York line as a Lieutenant, followed Montgomery to the walls of Quebec, and was at the assault upon that place on the night of the 31st Dec. 1775, where Montgomery fell; and at the battle of Longueuil was shot down and left for dead; but recovering, served as Captain in his regiment to the end of the war. My father's eldest son, Henry, in the early part of 1776, raised a regiment in the manor, and went to Fort Independence in the Highlands as commandant;

afterward joined Washington at White Plains, followed him in the retreat through New Jersey, was wounded in the head at the battle of New Brunswick, under Gen. Lee, while endeavoring to prevent the British from crossing the Raritan. In 1777, when Ticonderoga was abandoned by the Americans, Gen. Schuyler requested General Washington to send Col. Henry Van Rensselaer to the Northern army. Our army retreated from Ticonderoga into Vermont. The 1st New York regiment, with a park of brass artillery, was at Fort George. To save it was all-important to our cause. Colonel Van Rensselaer was directed to pick out of the militia then at Fort Edward four hundred volunteers, and stop the British advance at a defile near Fort Ann, at all hazards, until he could remove the stores, etc., from Fort George. How far he executed this order, the good effect it had in rallying a new army, you will learn by reference to Burgoyne's Trial, Wilkinson's Memoirs, etc. In this affair he was so grievously wounded as to disqualify him from taking rank in the line, and he became a cripple for life. The ball, which entered the upper part of the thigh-bone, was extracted after his death, quite flattened.

A third son, Philip, bore rank as Lieutenant-Colonel in the ordnance department, and had charge of the United States Armory in Albany to the end of the war. I was the youngest son, a boy at school; the late Stephen Van Rensselaer and his brother being boys also.

In the campaign of 1777, my father, with eight of his nephews and three of his sons, served together in the Northern campaign till Burgoyne's surrender. In fact, twelve of the name served in various military capacities in actual service during the war. The following were all of the eastern manor:

1. Robert Van Rensselaer was a commissioned Colonel, and a Brigadier-General; also a member of the Legislature, in the Revolution.

2. Killian, my father, was a Colonel.

3. Henry, my brother, was a Lieutenant-Colonel and a Colonel, etc.

4. Philip, my brother, was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the general staff in the ordnance department.

5. Nicholas, my brother, was a Captain in Van Schaick's regiment, New York line, to the end of the war.

6. James was a Major in the general staff of the army, inspector, etc., of Montgomery's army at Quebec.



7. Jeremiah was a Lieutenant in the 2d regiment of the New York line, and paymaster to the end of the war.
  8. John was a commissioned Colonel, etc.
  9. David was a commissioned Major, etc.
  10. Killian was a commissioned Lieutenant, etc.
  11. Peter was a Captain in the New York line, Livingston's regiment, to the end of the war.
  12. Henry was a Colonel, etc.
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## GENERAL HENDRICK K. VAN RENSSELAER.

REMINISCENCE BY THE HON. JOHN SANDERS, JR.

I still remember when I was 11 or 12 years old, that the old General, having been on a visit to his son at the West, on his return stayed with my father over night, and a day or two, at Scotia ; he was lame, but tall, muscular, slim and in every respect a fine looking old man. I had heard so much of his fearlessness that I listened with rapture to his tales as he fought anew his battles before my father and his little listener, with the glowing fervor of the revolutionary patriot. One thing I heard the old warrior say, in fighting his battles over again, " Our charge up the heights was made a little before sundown. I was shot in the hip downwards as I mounted up. I cheered my men onward ; *and onward they went.* I rolled to the foot of the hill among the dead, the dying and the wounded, and soon discovered myself lying within about six feet of a British officer, also severely wounded. We conversed during the night as friends, were too badly suffering and wounded to say much. In the morning we were both taken to the American camp, I as a victor, and he as a prisoner."

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Affidavit made in 1839, by the Hon. Killian K. Van Rensselaer to secure a pension for the widow of Gen. H. K. Van Rensselaer.

Early in the spring of 1776, Col. Van Rensselaer took a command as colonel or lieutenant-colonel, this deponent does not know which, and repaired with his men to the Highlands on the Hudson River, and took command of a post opposite West Point then called Fort Independence.

After that he joined Gen. Washington and his army at White Plains; and served and was attached to the Southern Army under Washington during the campaign of 1776. He was wounded in the head by a spent musket-ball at Brunswick, N. J., when the British Army attempted to cross the Raritan, following the American Army then retreating. It was understood without contradiction, that Gen. Schuyler commander-in-chief of the Northern Army, applied to Gen. Washington to permit Col. Van Rensselaer to join the Northern Army; this deponent has a distinct recollection of his return, and joining the army, from seeing the cocked *hat* he had on when he received a wound at Brunswick, which had an indent or part of a hole on the outside brim of the hat. Pending the retreat of Gen. St. Clair and army from Ticonderoga into Vermont, and his joining Gen. Schuyler at Fort Edward in the campaign of 1777—the British Army then advancing by the route of Skeenesboro and Fort Ann—it was necessary to make an effort to stop the British at least 24 hours at Fort Ann, to gain time to enable the garrison and park of artillery and publick stores at Fort George to be removed to Fort Edward. Out of the few Militia and troops at Fort Edward Gen. Schuyler ordered Col. Van Rensselaer peremptorily to select and take volunteers to about 400 strong, and by a forced march to advance and take post at a defile or pass past Fort Ann, formed by a ledge of rocks on his left and Wood Creek with a thick swamp on his right. Altho' the distance was upwards of 20 miles, his movement was so rapid that the defile was taken possession by his corps before daylight the next day. Gen. Schuyler's orders were that "he must defend that post at all hazard till 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the day next to the day his corps left Fort Edward; by that time the military stores and park of artillery, with Van Schaick's 1st Regt. of N. Y. Continental troops (enlisted for during the war) would make good their retreat." He executed his orders literally, except that he did not order his corps to quit the ground till dusk, to prevent the Indians pursuing; it commenced raining before 4 o'clock and continued to rain almost all that night. In the several attempts made by the British 9th Regt. of Infantry and Indians to dislodge his corps they were foiled and ultimately fell back, and waited for the German Legion, which the next morning came down, and then took possession of the pass he held the day before till night. He received what he considered



a mortal wound from a musket-ball in the upper part of his thigh, which shattered the bone, but refused to be taken off the battle-ground when his men retired — the loss of blood and the helpless state he was in, and the great distance thro' a thick forest, and the only path to Fort Edward blocked up by trees cut across it, with all the bridges broken up by a fatigue party sent up for that purpose the day before, induced him to adhere to his resolution to remain on the ground. After the troops had retired for some time a British officer crept up to him with a shattered leg, who made himself known as Captain Montgomery, nephew of Gen. Montgomery, who fell at the assault on Quebec in the American service. Capt. M. proposed to him to prevent the British Indians from scalping him if he would prevent the American Indians from scalping *him*. Shortly after a party of men came back to the field with a resolution to take him to Fort Edward, dead or alive ; they put him on a bier, and he prevailed on the men to take along Capt. Montgomery, who proved to be the kinsman of Gen. Montgomery, as he had stated, and whom the widow of Gen. Montgomery afterwards recognized as such, and took him from Albany to her residence. By common consent at the time, the defence of the defile at Fort Ann was a military achievement of great peril and gallantry, and by saving the stores and troops at Fort George, which would otherwise have been captured, essentially contributed to the subsequent capture of the British under Gen. Burgoyne. The ball which lodged in his thigh on that occasion shattered the bone and lodged so near the socket of the hip that no amputation could be made nor the ball be extracted. From the want of surgical aid his wound could not be dressed until he was bro't down to Albany (a distance of 56 miles after a lapse of four days). When he got to Albany Dr. Stringer, who was then at Barrington, Mass., 40 miles from Albany, was sent for, the surgeons in the hospital declaring that nothing could be done for him. When Dr. Stringer arrived his wound was in a state of mortification, and with great difficulty his life was saved. He lay in a helpless state for about a year, when he recovered so far as to be able to move about in a crippled state, with the wounded leg several inches shorter than the other, with the foot turned out, to the day of his death in 1816.

She was married to Captain James Drew April 10, 1792, by the Rev. Benjamin Moore, Assistant Minister of Trinity Church, New York, afterward Bishop of New York, the husband of her cousin Charity Clark. He was lost when in command of the *De Braak*, a sloop of war taken from the Dutch in 1795, in the 23d year of his service as a commissioned officer. His body was recovered and interred in the churchyard of St Peter's, Lewes, Del., and a monument erected over it by his widow, which I have recently caused to be restored. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1798, published the following account of the sad disaster, as detailed by an eyewitness in Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia:

“PHILADELPHIA, May 31. His Brittanic Majesty's Sloop of war *DeBraak*, Capt. Drew, overset in Old Kiln Roads, about 4 o'clock last Friday afternoon. She was at the time under mainsail & reefed topsails, just about to cast anchor, a mile from the lighthouse, her boat alongside waiting for the captain, who intended to go on shore at Lewes Town; a sudden slew of wind laid her down on her beam-ends; she immediately filled and went down, with Capt. Drew, his lieutenant, and 38 officers, seamen, and marines. The rest of the ship's company, about 25, including the boatswain, escaped in the boats, and several were taken up by a pilot boat. The *DeBraak* parted with the fleet off the Western Islands in chace of a strange sail, and was unable to join the convoy. About 25 days ago she fell in with, and captured, a Spanish ship from LaPlatta, bound to Spain, with a very valuable cargo, consisting of 200 tons of copper in bars, a quantity of cocoa, &c. The prize is arrived in the Delaware. 12 of the prisoners were lost in the sloop of war. The surviving Spanish prisoners, have been brought to Philadelphia, & given up to the agent of Spain. The crew of the *DeBraak* consisted of 83 persons in all, about half of whom were saved, including those who were

in the prize. The officers left alive are the prizemaster, a midshipman, and the boatswain. This melancholy accident is heightened by the captain's lady being so near as New York, where she was every hour in anxious expectation of meeting him. The prize lies at the fort."

Capt. John Drew, brother of Capt. James, who had distinguished himself in command of the frigate *Cerberus* from 1795 to '98, by a singular fatality had been drowned in Plymouth Sound the preceding January with his boat's crew and several officers while going ashore to report to the admiral, having brought in safely two prizes. The family was settled at Saltash, Cornwall, not far from where the captain of the *Cerberus* was lost. The seal of Capt. Drew in my possession shows that they were of the Irish branch, which intermarried in the 17th century with the Maunsells, which may account for his acquaintance with my aunt.

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G., p. 161.

#### THE LOSS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICA.

Little or no comment has accompanied the narratives which for several days it has been our painful duty to lay before our readers in connection with the wreck of the *Central America*. We have in fact preferred to forbear comment, both of our own and from correspondents, until the painful feelings and the excitement inseparable from so calamitous an event had lost something of their acuteness and force. It would be unjust, however, to the memories of her gallant commander, Lieut. Herndon, her first officer, Mr. Charles Van Rensselaer, her passengers without exception, and her crew, if some tribute were not paid to their courage, their humanity and devotion to duty even to the latest hour of that fearful emergency.

The hope which lingered, though but feebly, in the public mind, that the commander of the *Central America*, with perhaps some of his companions, might yet be restored to his family and to his country, is now gone. The list of the saved

is beyond doubt complete. It is well that it is so large. It is sad that it is so small; but sadder still that the men who proved themselves so worthy to live are counted among the dead.

And yet while the widow and the fatherless mourn, and individuals and families are overwhelmed with grief, a throb of grateful pride is felt through the entire community that their country's honor has not only been untarnished in the calamity, but has shone with increased lustre through the ebon darkness of the trying events. An Albany evening cotemporary has remarked that "if the disaster to the Central America has confined her commander and first officer in uncertain and shifting graves, it has placed over them monuments which will endure forever. Their manhood in first saving the women and the children from the wreck will not be forgotten." It cannot be. It will be told with grateful eulogiums to children and children's children as an illustration of the true seaman's chivalry, and as a stimulus to emulation; nor told of Herndon and Van Rensselaer alone; but of all who for those long and dreary hours toiled with them, and then fitly crowned their heroism and their generous humanity by giving to the weaker and helpless the first and only fruit of their exhausting labors. Noble men were they, not of man's making, but of the Almighty's creation.

We may not wonder that an educated officer of the U. S. navy acted as Herndon acted; or that one who so largely enjoyed his confidence as to be his first officer, bearing the honored name of Van Rensselaer, showed equal courage and self-sacrificing devotion; or even that the crew serving under such a commander, had imbibed something of his heroic, self-denying and chivalrous spirit. But we may marvel that amid from four to five hundred passengers, nine-tenths of whom were men who had been eagerly pursuing wealth away from almost all humanizing and restraining associations — too often reckless of everything, of life itself, in their eager clutching of gold — many of them painfully deficient in morality, social amenities and human sympathies, even before they went into the rugged associations of the gold mines — and all of them now almost within sight of the homes and friends from whom they had been for years absent, and of the competence for which they had toiled and sacrificed so much — men who for years had brooked no restraint, and had known no argument but the revolver,

no law but that of might — that these men should at such a time prove themselves submissive to the severest discipline, should yield an unhesitating and full obedience, not to force, but to the mildest form of counsel or persuasion, should manifest the most refined gallantry and the tenderest concern for women and children, should in a word exhibit the purest chivalry and the rarest delicacy and generosity, is a matter of wonder, and of grateful pride on the part of their countrymen.—*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

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### A DEED FOR ALL TIME.

A few moments before the ill-fated Central America went down, and when all hope of rescue was abandoned, the commander, Captain Herndon and his first Lieutenant, Mr. Van Rensselaer, went below, arrayed themselves in full uniform, and having taken their accustomed place on the quarter deck, thus calmly and fittingly met — their last enemy. There is a deep meaning in the act, which stamps it as true Christian heroism.

Look forth upon the sea —  
A cruel, angry sea!  
What meets our gaze — a noble ship  
Contending gallantly;  
Contending mid opposing waves,  
While round her wind and tempest raves.

Just like a thing of life,  
She bends to meet the blast;  
Nor heeds the elemental strife,  
Torn sail or quivering mast.  
'Tis vain! — nor force nor skill avail,  
Unless sweet mercy rule the gale.

Upon her broken deck,  
Woman's fair form is seen,  
With youth and manhood's sterner front,  
And childhood's graceful mien.  
Oh, earth! Oh, Heaven! have ye no power  
To succor in this fearful hour?

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Fair rose the radiant day,  
A smile on every lip;  
When from her mooring in the bay,  
Sprang forth that gallant ship.



With a loyal crew and a leader brave,  
Well skilled to guide o'er land or wave.

There was heard the song and dance,  
As the gladsome hours flew by,  
Joy beamed in every speaking glance,  
For home, sweet home drew nigh.  
E'en the grave, hardy sons of toil,  
Grew blithe as they neared their natal soil.

"We have toiled," say they, "for gold,  
We have wrung it from the mine;  
But our loved ones will pay us a thousand fold,  
When their arms around us twine.  
And the weary heart — it will all be past,  
When the exile greets his home at last.

Dreams, dreams — delusive dreams!  
That home thou never wilt see:  
No loving wife will thy neck enfold,  
No children climb thy knee.  
E'en now the storm spirit's shriek  
Is heard upon the gale,  
Hark! how the hollow echoes speak,  
Responsive to their wail.  
Finally the angry surges sweep,  
Danger and death are on the deep.

Then, oh, the wild dismay!  
The conflict and the strife,  
The deep unfathomed agony,  
As they battled for their life.  
The vain appeal, the bitter prayer,  
The grief, the madness, the despair!

Yet midst the gathering gloom,  
And horror of that night,  
Some god-like attribute shone forth  
In lines of living light;  
For noble Christian hearts were there,  
With martyr zeal to do and dare.

No base, unworthy thought,  
Within their breasts had place;  
But generous purpose, high resolve,  
Glowed in each manly face.  
Oh, glorious hope! Oh, faith sublime!  
That lifts to eternity from time.

And lo! upon their view,  
A friendly sail appears;  
The sight their waning strength renews,  
Their fainting spirit cheers.  
And first with tender care they seek  
The safety of the frail and weak.



But scarce their task was done,  
When fiercer grew the blast ;  
Vain the stout heart, the stalwart arm,  
The ship is sinking fast.  
And youth and hope and manhood's pride,  
Must perish neath the raging tide.

Then spoke that dauntless chief,  
To the second in command :  
"The way to heaven is just as brief,  
Thank God, by sea as land !  
One duty still remains — and then,  
We'll meet — we'll meet — our fate — like men."

Yet nature claims her dues,  
And one heart-burst is given,  
One yearning throb for those they'll meet  
No more on this side heaven.  
Briefly they part : — then midst the wreck  
Step forth upon the quarter-deck.

No common garb they wear,  
But calm amid the storm,  
Their country's badge they have assumed,  
Their navy uniform.  
Danger and death can both be met,  
But — girt with sword and epaulette !

'Twas on no battle-field,  
While gazing crowds stood by,  
To bear to future listening worlds  
How bravely they could die !  
A nobler impulse urged them on,  
This was their watchword — *duty done !*

Sidney and Bayard ! — their names  
On earth will never die !  
But here's a single act which shames  
Their vaunted chivalry.  
The twain, *our* hearts' deep founts to stir,  
Are Herndon and Van Rensselaer !

Heroic pair ! united here,  
By friendship's holy tie,  
Useless the meed of earthly praise,  
Their record is on high.  
True to their trust, till latest breath ;  
Did they not triumph over death ?

And all that faithful band !  
Who, manly, tender, true,  
Shrunk not from duty's stern command,  
We yield *them* reverence too !  
Soft be their rest ! e'en though no eye  
Marks where their sacred relics lie.

And woman—is she alone  
    Regardless of their doom?  
Ah, no! an humble wreath we lay,  
    Upon their honored tomb.  
While proud and grateful tears we shed,  
Over our great, our glorious dead.  
  
And ye, Columbia's sons,  
    A nation's hope and pride,  
Would ye exalt the stripes and stars,  
    Think how your commanders died!  
No flag victorious on the sea  
    Can point to loftier names than these,  
And though their work is done,  
    Their earthly sun has set,  
Yet o'er their bright, their high career,  
    A halo lingers yet.  
A heavenly radiance pure and free,  
It points to immortality.

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#### THE FIRST OFFICER.

If the disaster to the Central America has confined her commander and first officer in uncertain and shifting graves, it has placed monuments over them which will endure for ever. Their manhood in first saving the women and children from the wreck, will not be forgotten. It is in splendid contrast with the selfishness, the confusion, the indecision and the cowardice which made the misfortune of the Arctic a disgrace in part and in part a crime.

The captain of a ship is the source of the authority that governs her. The executive on board of her, however, is the first officer. To the courage, the devotion, and the energy of Charles W. Van Rensselaer, there are fifty-seven living witnesses—tender women and their little children. He superintended their embarkation, accomplished it without loss, and without the disfigurement of a struggle to snatch from his helpless charge the only means of safety, and then took his station by the side of his commander, and awaited in dignity the sinking of his ship.—*Albany Eve. Journal*, Sept. 22, 1857.

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#### TRIBUTE TO CHARLES W. VAN RENSSELAER, FIRST OFFICER OF THE CENTRAL AMERICA.

The N. Y. *Times* pays the following tribute to the first officer of the Central America, Mr. Van Rensselaer, who went down with the vessel. As we have before stated, Mr.

Van Rensselaer was a brother of Rev. Mr. Van Rensselaer of this city.

"Mr. Van Rensselaer was the son of Hon. John S. Van Rensselaer, of Albany, a member of a family whose name is identified with every period of the history of our State. With a natural taste for the sea, he early adopted it as a profession. For a while he was a Lieutenant in the United States Revenue Service, but lost his commission by the reduction of the number of officers in the service. He then took the place of first officer on the *George Law*, and although a weighty responsibility for so young a man, yet never had the company any reason to regret the appointment.

As executive officer of the ship, Mr. Van Rensselaer had even more care thrown upon him than upon the captain, and the writer knows, from a voyage with him, how well it was borne. He has been much at sea, in sailing vessels and steamers, yet he never saw one sailed so scientifically as the *Central America*. Observations were constantly made, and no expedient of seamanship was untried. Captain Herndon has often expressed to the writer his warm friendship for Mr. Van Rensselaer. He had urged, he said, on Mr. Van Rensselaer to gratify his taste for the sea in some more pleasant situation than a California steamer—to purchase a ship for himself, and thus voyage when and where he wished. "But," said Captain Herndon, "Mr. Van Rensselaer will remain in this line from personal feelings to me." And warmly was this reciprocated by his commander. He gave him entire confidence.

A few months since Captain Herndon was confined by illness on the home voyage, and Mr. Van Rensselaer had the undivided responsibility of conducting the vessel from Aspinwall to New York. In the intricate navigation of the West Indies he scarcely left the deck at night. The passengers knew little of him, for he confined himself to his duties, leaving the captain to discharge the courtesies of the voyage.

At the sad time of the wreck he proved fully equal to the crisis. We learn from Mr. Frazer, the second officer, that everything was done by Mr. Van Rensselaer that seamanship could devise. He aided in helping the women and children into the boats, and then when the fatal hour came he and Captain Herndon went to their state-rooms, put on their uniform and took their places side by side on the paddlebox, the officer's post. Mr. Van Rensselaer then

lighted a cigar and was calmly smoking it when the steamer reeled down beneath them into the depths below.

Mr. Easton who rose to the surface with them says, "Mr. Van Rensselaer told me in the water that he should not leave Captain Herndon." And thus, we fear, they died together. Yet it was for both a gallant death. The family of young Van Rensselaer have bled on many a battle field from the old French wars to Queenstown Heights, yet none of them died more nobly than this young sailor at the post of duty. He was worthy of the friendship of Herndon.

While his friends mourn him, there are many who miss his open-handed liberality. With fortune sufficient for his wants, his purse was ready for the needy, and there are families now in Albany whose rent he regularly paid, and ministered to their wants. He was generous and whole-souled, and when we first heard of the wreck, we felt that he was lost, for we knew that he and Herndon would be the last to quit the ship. And so it was. They died as they should, nobly." —*Rochester Union and Advertiser.*

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#### AN INCIDENT AT SEA — LIEUTENANT HERNDON.

On the most beautiful morning of August 27, as the Illinois was steaming towards Havana, having got off the reef the previous night, we met the steamship Central America, with her myriad of passengers bound for Aspinwall. She passed on the port side within one hundred yards.

The engines of both ships were quiet. The passengers thronged the decks of the Central America, eager to catch a glance at the unfortunate ship, of whose mishap they had learned at Havana, and which Captain Herndon, with his ship was hastening to relieve.

Upon the wheel-house stood Captain Herndon; near by, Van Rensselaer, the first officer; Purser Hull, Dr. Tennyson, and a number of gentlemen easily recognized and known. When directly opposite, Captain Herndon hailed Captain Boggs in that distinct and gentlemanly tone of voice that so distinguished him: "Good morning, Captain Boggs! can I render you any assistance?" Captain Boggs replied. "We are all right, and bound for Havana." The wheels again moved, and the ships separated. We all stood and gazed after the Central America, as the foam dashed against her side, and the reflection of white water upon her quarters and stern, rendered the sight imposing, we exclaimed, how

beautiful. My friend Church, the celebrated artist of New York, he who transferred Niagara Falls to canvas, stood at my elbow. That last sight of the Central America, will not be lost to him, nor ever effaced from my memory, as it was the everlasting adieu to a noble ship, and many kind and respected friends among her officers.—*Cors. Boston Traveler.*

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## THE WRECKED STEAMER.

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THE STATEMENT OF TWO ALBANIANS—ACCOUNT OF THE  
ESCAPE OF MRS. O'CONNER AND HER SON—NEW  
AND INTERESTING FACTS.

Having learned that Mrs. O'Conner, and her son, H. T. O'Conner, had reached their home in this city, we sent our reporter to glean whatever they might be able to communicate in reference to the great catastrophe—the loss of the Central America. Mrs. O'Conner is about middle age, of medium height, and at present is suffering from excitement and exposure, having been five days in wet clothes without change. She seems very nervous, and wants quiet, which her *kind* friends are reluctant to give her; the house being thronged with acquaintances calling to congratulate herself and son on their marvelous escape.

The son is a sprightly, intelligent young man of about seventeen years, and now appears quite well except a lame ankle. They went to California three years ago, where the mother, who is a dressmaker, wrought with her needle, earning \$3 per day, while her son worked in a printing office. She had but two children; the son who accompanied her and another about six years old. It was for the purpose of securing means to educate her children she went to California, where, by the efforts of both, they had succeeded in saving over \$2,000, most of which was lost, they having escaped with a little more than life. We can but hope that the object of her solicitude—the education of her sons—will yet be attained.

Although Mrs. O'Conner and her son had so often given a narration of their eventful experience on their home voyage from California, they very kindly consented to answer any questions; not much was communicated, however, which has not already been given to the public. But



as the narratives of those residing in our midst will have a special interest, we give such facts as we were able to draw out.

Mrs. O'Conner says she felt that the vessel was lost from the time the fires were extinguished. She heard the engineer say the vessel leaked above the coppers. She succeeded in getting off in the fourth boat load, which reached the Marine at five o'clock, but had to bail for her life.

Previous to leaving the steamer, she says Captain Herndon came into the cabin, the men at the buckets having given out, and besought the gentlemen, "by their love for their homes and fireside, to help keep the vessel from sinking." A great many of the passengers were so intoxicated, from drinking freely of liquor and going without food, that they were unfit to do anything, and betook themselves to their berths. Among those intoxicated was Mr. —, who was regarded in California as the greatest temperance lecturer who had visited that country. No harsh judgment, however, should be formed from these facts; being utterly prostrated from want of food and rest, they betook themselves to stimulants as a last resort; but it proved in this case — as in most other cases — a ruinous alternative, as many, utterly insensible, perished in their berths, and others on deck and in their cabins were too far gone in inebriety to avail themselves of the means of escape when whelmed in the yawning abyss of waters.

No marks of inebriety, however, were observed in the officers. Captain Herndon and Mr. Van Rensselaer are spoken of as calm and self-possessed, and having borne themselves with great courage.

Mrs. O'Conner speaks in the highest terms of the lamented Mr. Van Rensselaer, who took charge of the removal of the ladies and children, and aided in letting them down from the steamer, and thinks he held the rope which dropped her safely into the life boat.

The young man also spoke in high terms of Mr. Van Rensselaer, but when asked in regard to Ashby, with a look of contempt, replied, "Sir — Ashby is a coward — a *coward*" — with emphasis — and added — "I heard the Captain of the Empire City tell him so to his face, and said, 'If you had been on my ship, I would have put a ball through you, or hung you at the yard arm.'"

Young O'Conner was standing on the hurricane deck, and saw Mr. Van Rensselaer on the wheelhouse when the

fatal plunge was made. He says the passengers seemed reconciled to their fate and uttered no outcry, when the steamer sank. Before this, however, most of the passengers were praying to God to have mercy upon their souls; while some few cursed and swore horribly.

After they had been in the water for an hour, one of the passengers attempted to get upon another's raft, and O'Conner heard the occupant swear he would blow his brains out if he did not get off. The loss of such a man is no public calamity. From the time the ship went down, for several hours there was a continual cry going up from the struggling mass of human beings, such as no one can imagine who was not there, and perfectly indescribable.

O'Conner says he was on the point of giving up, when the light of the *Ellen* suddenly appeared, and in a minute after he was picked up. A number of persons died along side the vessel before they could be got aboard, and he was himself so much exhausted that he could not have survived much longer. When the rope was dropped he was unable to hold on to it, but succeeded in twisting it around his waist, and it was scarcely done before he was on board. The sailors were exceedingly expeditious in the work of rescue, and as kind as possible to the shipwrecked; opening their chests and freely giving them supplies from their wardrobe.

O'Conner had on a suit of summer clothes when rescued. Thinks he had been about seven hours in the water, and was pretty thoroughly chilled. The first passengers were picked up by the *Ellen* about two or three o'clock in the morning, and the last at nine, when two were picked up together. At eleven the captain steered for Norfolk.

There was a very fine looking young man on board, who went by the cognomen of "handsome Harry." He was from New York. O'Conner did not know his real name; but thinks he must have been lost.

The meeting of the survivors on board the *Empire City* is described as exceedingly affecting. Only four persons on the *Marine* found their friends safe. Mrs. O'Conner had for five days supposed her son lost, and received him as "life from the dead."

O'Conner confirms the report that Engineer Ashby endeavored to rob him of the life-preserver which his mother had put on him before she left the steamer. Ashby coarsely ordered him to take it off, and he refused; upon which the engineer drew his bowie knife to cut it off, and would have

done so, but for the interference of the young man from New York, who nobly aided him in resisting Ashby. The young man thus saved O'Conner, though he was himself lost.

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H., pp. 150, 194, 210.

BENJAMIN MOORE.

The death of Mr. Benjamin Moore at Boston, September 6th, brings sorrow not only to his home, but to a wide-spread family connection and many friends. Mr. Moore died at the age of sixty-eight years, after a very brief illness, of apoplexy.

He was the eldest child of Clement Clarke Moore, the distinguished scholar and benefactor of the General Theological Seminary of New York, whose name is endeared to all the children of this broad land as the author of "The Night Before Christmas." Mr. Moore's grandfather, Benjamin Moore, was the Bishop of the Diocese of New York from 1801 to 1816, leaving behind him a saintly memory. Prof. C. C. Moore married a daughter of William Taylor, Lord Chief Justice of Jamaica, W. I., whose wife, Elizabeth Van Cortlandt, was a lineal descendant of Stephenas Van Cortlandt, the first proprietor of the Manor of Cortlandt.

Mr. Moore was born in New York, and became a resident of this township nearly fifty years ago; an ardent lover of Nature, a botanist and ornithologist, he was never happier than when amid rural surroundings or in the beautiful home he embellished with such exquisite taste. A man of marked purity and gentleness of character; true to his convictions and of unswerving loyalty to what he deemed the right, he was a gentleman in every sense of that much abused term. Responsive to every appeal for charity, Mr. Moore's ample means enabled him to give liberally, and avoiding publicity in his constantly dispensed benefactions, he followed always the Scriptural rule, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." By the parish he so loved and where he long held the position of senior warden he will be sorely missed. His family have the sympathy and prayers of the community, and the consciousness that he for whom they mourn has left a good record and the remembrance of a life (to use the words of one who had known

him from childhood), "adorned with simplicity and godly sincerity."

In 1842, Mr. Moore married Elizabeth, the daughter of Major John Sing, of this village, who survives him. He leaves three children, Clement Clarke, Casimir De Rham, and Katharine Theresa Moore. *C. E. V. C.*

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## TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

BENJAMIN MOORE.

At a regular meeting of the vestry of Trinity Church, Sing Sing, held on the 10th day of September, 1886, the committee appointed by the vestry to prepare resolutions touching the death of the late senior warden, Mr. Benjamin Moore, presented the following tribute of respect which was ordered to be placed on the record book of the parish, and a copy sent to the family of the late Mr. Moore, and published in the local papers and in the *New York Churchman*:

The rector, wardens and vestrymen of Trinity Church, Sing Sing, desire to place on record this tribute to the memory of the late Benjamin Moore, whom it has pleased Almighty God so suddenly to call to his rest in Paradise.

A vestryman of this parish from its organization in 1868, he was at the time of his death in active, faithful and loving discharge of his duties as its senior warden.

In these offices he ever evinced a rare love of the church, and a loyal devotion to her best interests, always among the foremost in carrying on her work in the community, this parish will ever cherish with grateful remembrance the invaluable services he has rendered, and his care and solicitude for its prosperity.

As a wise counsellor, a kind hearted friend and a true Christian gentleman, we mourn his loss; as a devout and regular communicant of the church, we revere his memory.

To the family of our departed brother, we tender our sincere and heart-felt sympathies in this time of their great bereavement.

GEO. D. ARTHUR, }  
ROB'T G. MEAD, } Committee.  
WM. H. BARLOW. }



DR. ALEXANDER H. HOFF, United States army, died at Philadelphia, Pa., at two o'clock P. M., Saturday, August 19, 1876, of dysentery. The deceased was well and favorably known in different parts of the State, having practiced successfully his profession near Hudson on the North river, at Mount Morris on the Genesee, and finally at Albany. Dr. Hoff was Surgeon-General on the staff of Gov. Clark, in 1854-56, also the attending and examining surgeon at the cavalry and infantry rendezvous, United States army, at Albany for many years before the civil war, and was then distinguished for his prompt and strict attention to duty. He was among the first to offer his services at the outbreak of the war, was surgeon of Fred. Townsend's regiment. On the march to Bethel the head of this regiment was fired into by some other regiment, the two coming into the common road in the darkness of the night and the heavy timber, the one from Newport News and the other from Hampton. On this occasion the doctor carried a lantern at the head of the column which was shot out of his hand. He was present the following day at the battle of Bethel. Entering the army at the beginning of the war, he served throughout the struggle filling many positions of trust and responsibility and finally from a most decided taste for the army, confirmed by years of active service, he entered the regular service. He accompanied the first troops sent to Sitka, where he served two years; was then stationed in the harbor of San Francisco, and afterwards at the recruiting depot, Governor's Island, N. Y. Whilst in New York, Dr. Hoff's high culture as physician and surgeon becoming fully known to the Surgeon-General, United States army, he was detailed as a member of the Medical Examining Board, and was in the discharge of this duty when taken sick.

Dr. Hoff was the oldest son of the Rev. B. Hoff, a distinguished clergyman of the Dutch Reformed church. He married a daughter of Gen. John S. Van Rensselaer of Albany (sister of Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer of Geneva, N. Y.), and leaves a widow and four children, Assistant Surgeon J. V. R. Hoff, United States army, and three daughters.—*Geneva Gazette*.

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DR. JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER, who died at his house in Forty-ninth street, of pneumonia, on the seventh instant, at the age of seventy-eight years, was buried from St. Paul's chapel on Friday last. Among his pall-bearers were the



venerable Messrs. H. C. De Rham and William Barnwell. Mr. Van Rensselaer was born at the "Old Mansion," Greenbush, Rensselaer county, on August 4, 1793. He was a descendant of the early Dutch settlers who, in 1637, founded the colony of "Rensselaerwyck." After completing his academical education at Yale College, Jeremiah came to this city in 1813, and entered the office of his uncle, Archibald Bruce, M. D. Here he acquired and cultivated that taste for the natural sciences for which he, in after life, was distinguished. After being admitted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1817, he went abroad and spent three years in attendance upon the lectures and hospitals in Edinburgh, London and Paris. On his return to New York he was extensively engaged in the practice of his profession, was for a long series of years corresponding secretary of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, and during the winter of 1825, he delivered a course of lectures on geology before the New York Athenæum with great success. In 1840, he visited Rome and remained in Europe for three years. In 1843 he resumed practice. In 1852 he retired from active pursuits to the care of his estates, again occupying the "Old Mansion" at Greenbush. In 1867 he again visited Europe. In October last he returned to this city in feeble health, and lived here until his death.

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I., p. 169.

#### A CONFIRMATION OF A PARCELL OF LANDS AT SCHENECSTADE, GRAUNTED UNTO SANDERS LEN- ARSEN GLENNE.

Richard Nicholls Esq. Governour under his Royal High-  
ness James Duke of Yorke &c. of all his Territoryes in  
America, To all to these Presents shall come Greeting.  
Whereas there is a Certain Parcell of Land lying between the  
Lake and the River over against the Town of Schanecstade  
Containing by Estimation one hundred acres or fifty Mor-  
gens, which said Parcell of Land Sanders Lenardsen Glenne  
hath formerly Bought and Purchased of the Indyan Pro-  
prietors, and given them due Satisfaction for the same ye said  
Indyans do acknowledge to have received: NOW KNOW  
YEE, That by virtue of the Commission and Authority unto

me Given by his Royal Highnesse the Duke of Yorke for the Reasons aforesaid, as also that the said Lands may be manured and planted and for divers other good causes and Considerations mee hereunto moving I have thought fitt to give Ratify, Confirm and Graunt, And by these Presents do give Ratify, confirme and Graunt, unto the said Sanders Lenardsen Glenn, his heirs and assigns the aforesaid Parcell of Land with all woods, Marshes, Pastures, Fishing, Fowling and Hunting, and all other Proffits, Comodities and Emoluments to the said Parcell of Land belonging with their, and every of their appurtenances, and of every part and parcell thereof: To have and to hold the said Parcell of Land and pemisses with all and singular their Appurtenances to the said Sanders Lenardsen Glenne his heirs and assigns, to the Proper use and behoofe of the said Sanders Lenardsen Glenne his heirs and assigns for ever, rendring and paying or Causing to be Rendred and paid unto the Governour of these his Royall Highnesse his Territoryes, and unto such Governors his successors as shall be by his said Royall Highnesse appointed, according to the Customary Rate of the Country for new Plantacions: The said Sanders Lenardsen Glenne, likewise doing and performing, such acts and things, as shall be constituted and Ordained by his Royall Highnesse and his Heirs or such Governor or Governors as shall from time to time be appointed and set over him. And the said Saunders Lenardsen Glenne, his Heirs or assigns or some or one of them are to Cause a Convenient part of the said Land to be manured and planted within three Years after the date thereof, or hee or they, shall forfeit his or their Right Title and Interest in the Premisses.

Given under my hand and Seale at Fort James in New Yorke this 3d day of November in the 17th yeare of his Maj'tyes Raigne, and in the yeare of our Lord GOD 1665.

RICHD. NICOLLS.

"The foregoing is a true Copy of the original thereof Recorded in the Secretarys Office of the Province of New York in the Book of Patents No. 1. fo: 40. &c.

"Examd. by me 1st September, 1762.

"G. BANYAR, D. Secy."

FROM THE SCOTIA MSS.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY EDWARD VISCOUNT CORNBURY,  
[L. s.] Captain-Genl. and Governr. in Chief of the  
Provinces of New York and Nova Caesarea and all ye Ter-  
ritories and Tracts of Land depending thereon in America  
and Vice-Admiral of the same &c.

You are hereby Commanded and required immediatly on  
sight hereof, to take such measures and make such prepara-  
tion for the security of ye Garrison and Town of Schoneectady  
as may put ye same into a sufficient posture of Defence  
against ye Attacks and invasions of an Enemy, and without  
delay to sett sufficient stockadoes round the said Towne as  
has formerly been done, and also to repaire and make good  
the deffects of ye stockadoes round the flört there; and for  
the due and speedy performance thereof, you are hereby  
directed to Issue your Warrant to the swoine Assessors of  
ye sd. Towne and Liberties thereof, directing them to  
appoint and lay upon each ffreeholder and inhabitant of  
ye same an equal share and charge of ye sd. worke. And  
for so doing this shall be your sufficient Warrant. Given  
under my hand and seal at New York this eighth day of  
November 1703.

CORNBURY.

To Captain Johannes Saunders (Glen) and Adam Vro-  
man, Esqre, these to Execute; and if any p'son shall refuse  
to pay his share of what he may be assessed, or to p'form his  
part of ye sd. worke, you are hereby empowered to destrain  
ye goods of such person.

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“NEW YORK, December 24, 1711.

“SR.

“I have, Pursuant to your Desire in your letter of ye 4th  
Instant Directed Capt. Matthews to make the Number of  
Men in your Garrison Fourty.

“I will order the Acct. you sent me for repairing Your  
Fortification to be Examined, and will Direct the Money  
Given for that and Albany to be Applied to those Uses.

I am

Sr

“your humble Servant

“To

“RO: HUNTER.

“CAPT. JOHANNES SANDERS GLEN

“Schanectady.”

EXTRACTS FROM THE SCOTIA BIBLE IN DUTCH NOW  
IN THE POSSESSION OF JACOB G. SANDERS, AL-  
BANY.

1648—5 Novr.—Is my father Johannes Sanders Glen born.

1658—This place (Scotia) was taken possession of by Benoni Van Kalder, Sander Lendersen Glen and William Teller.

1684—12 August—My grandmother Cathrina Doungen died.

1685—3d October—My *uncle* Jacob Sanders Glen rested in the Lord.

1685—13th November—My *grandfather* Alexander Lendersen Glen rested in the Lord.

1690—On the 8th and 9th February was a lamentable murder committed at Schenectady by the French and their Indian allies. All burnt but 5 houses. But at Scotia no harm done by the express order of the Governor, for the good done by my grandfather and my father to a certain captive papist (Priest), and other prisoners in the war between our Indians and the French.

1688—5th November—My wife Sarah Wendell born.

1691—My father and mother were married.

1691—29th December—I Jacob Glen was born in Albany.

1695—April 16—My uncle Alexander Glen rested in the Lord.

1694—February 18th—My brother Abraham Glen was born.

1696—June 8—My sister Margaretta Glen was born.

1697—January 19th—She has rested in the Lord.

1697—December 28—The Patroon Kilian Van Rensselaer and David Schuyler have brought the news of peace. God be thanked!

1717—15 December—I Jacob Glen was joined in holy matrimony to Sarah Wendell.

1721—June 9th—Our daughter *Deborah* was born.

1724—April 10th—My mother died.

1731—November 6th—My father rested in the Lord aged 83 years one day.

*End of entries by Colonel Jacob Glen.*

1762—N. S. 16 August—Col. Jacob Glen died.

1762—19th August—My step-mother Sarah Glen (mother-in-law?) died.

1782—September 13—John Sanders died.

1786—March 8th—Deborah Sanders died.

## SANDERS GENEALOGY.

(1)—ROBERT AND ELSIE SANDERS.

(2)-1678, May 8th-Barent born  
married Maryya Wendell.

(3)-1714, July 10th-John born  
married Deborah Glen.

(4)-1764, June 20th-Margaretta born  
married Killian K. Van Rens-  
selaer.

















